"Corrupt" Italians *Michael Ledeen & Claire Sterling*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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The China Bungle
Thomas L. Hughes

Packaged Politicians
KEN BODE

Wallace in Massachusetts
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Taxing Consumption
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Grease Bills
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from Washington ®
February 28, 1976

A Choice Not an Echo

Humor keeps breaking into politics though sometimes it is the wry sort. There was, for example, the generally successful effort to keep New Hampshire's Republican Gov. Meldrim Thomson far away from the man he endorsed, Ronald ("In your heart you know he's right") Reagan. Gov. Thomson supports Reagan because William Loeb, publisher of the *Manchester Union Leader*, supports Reagan, and Thomson takes his orders from Loeb and is one of the few people ever elected with Loeb support. Generally it's the kiss of death.

Reagan tried to avoid contact with Thomson because it would remind everybody of Loeb, whose paper headlined a column "Kissinger the Kike?" and a front-page editorial, "Jerry the Jerk." Gov. Thomson broke through the Reagan cordon on one occasion and did untold damage in a short time.

The New Hampshire primary is all but over now, and eyes have turned to the next one in Massachusetts (March 2) while, in another field of activity over in China, our former President, Richard Nixon, is recalling happier times with a more appreciative audience. (Four years ago the first returns in New Hampshire announced that Dixville Notch had voted 19 to one for Nixon, and the noted TV commentators buckled down to interpret the arresting event.)

The Reagan staff finally had to let Gov. Thomson campaign with their man, and he distressed them by exuberantly declaring that his candidate was "more than 50 percent ahead." That was just what the press was waiting for—somebody to fix an official score by which they could judge whether the primary had been "won" or "lost."

The press not merely describes presidential primaries; it participates in them. That is less the fault of the press, I think, than of the strange, spongy primaries themselves in which it is often hard to say where anybody stands. Presidential possibilities are first "mentioned" for the office before they bashfully come forward, and the press is The Great Mentioner. Then after the primaries start, it becomes a sporting event, like the Olympics, and it is not easy to understand, so the press comes forward again. You have a situation like that in New Hampshire with four Democratic liberal look-alikes (Udall, Bayh, Shriver and Harris), one Democratic what-is-it, (Jimmy Carter), and the two Republican I'm more-anti-government-than-you-are entrants, Ford and Reagan. Now the press becomes odds maker, to say after it's over who won. A case in point occurred in 1972; the press decided that frontrunner Muskie had to get 50 percent in New Hampshire to win, and when he actually got only 48 percent and McGovern got a surprising 37 percent, the press said Muskie had suffered a severe psychological "defeat," and he never recovered.

After Gov. Thomson made the Reagan retainers grit their teeth by claiming an advance victory (which may very well come) instead of poor-mouthing, he turned to another favorite subject, amending the 14th Amendment. The 14th Amendment, you remember, is the one forbidding states to "deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law." The governor believes this gives too much power to judges, who are always interfering to protect the rights of the accused, or poor people, or those who argue they should be considered innocent until proven guilty. Reagan understandably gives these ideas a wide berth.

One of the difficulties about running for President is the people who get into bed with you. With the NH primary over we can forget Phrasemaker Loeb for another quadrennium. That will be hard on him. He told "Meet the Press" on February 15 that attacks on him were due "to the dishonesty of the liberal communications industry, which presently dominates the United States, unfortunately." The pistol-packing publisher explained to the TV audience that he hadn't actually ever shot anybody: "You carry a pistol to avoid unpleasant situations," he said urbanely, "not to make them." You need a gun, maybe, if you call Sherman Adams "Shermy Wormy," Dwight Eisenhower "that stinking hypocrite," and Gen. George C. Marshall, "Benedict Arnold."

It is not often that the ideological differences between two parties in an American presidential election are potentially so sharp as they are in 1976. It is just possible that this could be one of the great landmark elections. It is emphasized again by the latest battle by Democrats in Congress to override the President on a big economic issue, in this case the jobs bill. On the Republican side it matters very little ideologically whether Ford or Reagan gets the nomination because on economics and the responsibilities of the government they see alike.

They believe the role of government on the domestic scene should be curtailed; they believe that inflation is a greater danger than unemployment; they believe that previous administrations have gone too far in trying to ameliorate social problems; they believe that free enterprise, corporate competition and private industry are better leaders in restoring prosperity than Washington; they are willing to make greater social sacrifices than liberals to balance the budget. These are matters of the most profound importance and they have rarely been so evident.

Almost certainly the next Congress will be Democratic again, judging by polls of party preference, so if Republicans do win the presidential race, Ford or Reagan or whoever must cope again with Congress in a split government. That, too, raises the question of the philosophical Grand Canyon that divides Washington. Whether the Democratic nominee, whoever he is, can make this Great Divide plain, whether he can persuade the apprehensive voters (as George McGovern could not) of his competence, other things being equal, whether he can articulate the issue and carry on a campaign of illumination rather than of personalities is at the heart of the great drama now starting.

There have been few such elections: McKinley demanded high tariffs while Bryan shouted for free silver (which meant easy credit) and the public chose McKinley; Warren Harding offered "normalcy" against Cox's internationalism and the public chose Harding; FDR urged government intervention against *laissez-faire* by Hoover and the public chose FDR. This too, could be one of those rare occasions, a genuine contest over philosophies, not personalities.

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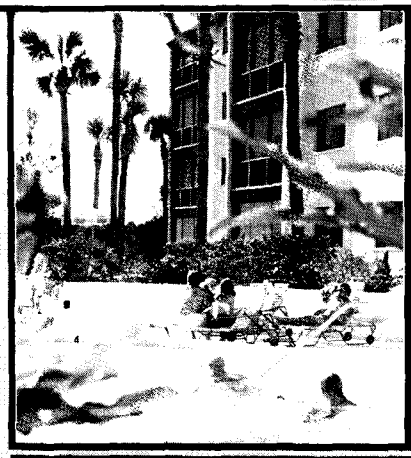

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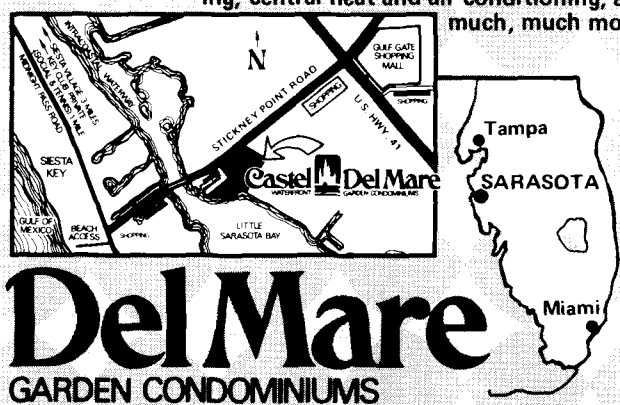

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George Wald
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in THE PROGRESSIVE

"We are confronted by a lunatic process which propels itself, like a machine gone mad. The atom bomb of 1945 encourages a win syndrome in which the bomb is to create a *Pax Americana;* the nuclear win syndrome gathers a massive constituency, in finance, business, the Pentagon, science, government, even labor; that constituency is compelled to overwhelm its opponents by concocting a synthetic anti-communism; anti-communism offers the pretext for more armaments and for the 'mad momentum' in technology; technology spreads the illusion of power, and the illusion reinforces the win syndrome, so that the cycle continues on its own . . .

"Every participant is sane, but all collectively are trapped in psychosis."

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"The Doomsday Strategy"
in THE PROGRESSIVE

"We must first understand that, at present, everything in the American empire is for sale: morality, the public interest, politicians. . . . The travesty is that those who brought us the Indochina war and the arms race, the body counts and the smart bombs, that those who call corporate imperialism economic growth and who starve our society for private profit, have been able to come forward as men of gravitas and decency."

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Grease Bills

"Machinery stalled for lack of grease," was the urgent cable Lockheed's man in Jiddah sent to company headquarters in Marietta, Georgia in 1973 when negotiations over the sale of some airplanes to the Saudi Arabian government bogged down. The grease referred to in the cable is called "cumshaw" or "baksheesh" in other company documents subpoenaed by the Senate subcommittee on multinational corporations—all euphemisms for bribe money. Lockheed, like other international companies that do business with foreign governments, finds that its grease bills have grown at an alarming rate in the last decade. By the company's own estimate, it has given $22 million to government officials since 1970, and spent about $200 million altogether on "agents' fees" to help win contracts abroad. Lockheed is not alone in this business. Others that have reportedly greased their way to success with political contributions and bribes, and are now under investigation are the Northrop and Boeing aircraft companies, Exxon and Tenneco. What is most startling about the recent reports of bribery is that the practice went on not only in undeveloped countries like Indonesia, Iran and Saudi Arabia, but also in the "advanced" democracies of Italy, West Germany, the Netherlands and Japan.

Of course the United States itself has not escaped untarnished. As the investigations of Richard Nixon's campaign finances revealed, the international oil companies—to cite one lobby—paid millions of dollars into the presidential reelection kitty. More recently the inquiry by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) laid bare the domestic US greasing system maintained by one large multinational corporation—Gulf Oil. Dozens of influential, and many lesser politicians were kept on a steady diet of Gulf corporate cash. One may assume that some other big companies had similar policies; competition must have dictated that.

The SEC, the Watergate investigators and Sen. Frank Church's multinational corporations subcommittee have laid out a fairly complete map of the workings of this global bribe system. Participants prefer to speak of commissions' and agents' fees, but in all cases the payments serve the same purpose. A government official or an independent middleman working in conjunction with an official arranges to obtain a contract for a company. In return he demands a fee, usually a percentage of the total value of the contract, to be paid

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into his private account. The corporation, upon signing the contract, delivers payment to the fixer through an "off the books" account in Switzerland or France. One of these sleazy accounts was apparently kept by the very respectable New York and Paris law firm Coudert Brothers. The system has been in operation long enough now to have become an institution, and the wad of corporate documents released by the Church subcommittee reveals that American businessmen have attacked this aspect of international trade with the same ingenuity, determination and skill they have applied to other tasks. The American bribe system may well be the best in the world. It certainly is the largest.

As if to confirm this impression, the Conference Board, an independent research group financed chiefly by American companies, released a survey on Abraham Lincoln's birthday indicating that US executives are so inured to this system that they feel they must defend it. The survey of 73 anonymous executives found that the overwhelming majority believed they not only had the "right" but the obligation to pay bribes to foreigners if that is the local custom. And bribery is very often the local custom; in India where drawing fine moral distinctions is a high art, bribery below certain sums was made legal, above them grounds for jail. As one vice president of a rubber company put it: "All of us involved in international business are aware that certain payments to government officials are quite common and are an acceptable method of doing business in many parts of the world. Whatever your moral viewpoint may be, the fact is that if you are going to do business in these countries and remain competitive, some such payments must be made." Perhaps the harshest comment came from an industrial machinery manufacturer: "If anyone thinks that these [moral standards] are vastly different in other countries than they are in the United States, then that person must indeed be naive." And a third said that "We do far less 'entertaining' of potential customers overseas than in our domestic divisions." These are the voices of experience; the jaded often do not lie.

Bribery may be commonplace today because the fortunes of big corporations hinge more than ever before on decisions made by government officials, often obscure functionaries whom the public never knows and the press never sees. Hundreds of millions of dollars can be gained or lost on the granting of a single contract, and there's a great temptation for the bureaucrat or the minor potentate to cream off some of the money as it passes through his hands. The corporations are flexible. Like flowing water, they seek the easiest route down the mountain, and when they encounter an obstacle, they negotiate. They do what is required of them to make a profit, and when the governments they do business with are staffed by corrupt officials, they make corrupt deals. This is why many executives seem only moderately embarrassed, but greatly confused about the publicity being given to the international bribery system. In their view it is government officials who demand bribes; yet now other officials who do not accept bribes are accusing them of corruption. The tendency is to dismiss the latter group as "do-gooders."

The problem is that multinational companies do not operate within the rule of law. They must comply with so many national codes and customs that no particular set of laws seems paramount. It is the lowest common denominator that rules their conduct. In response to the bad publicity, many companies are rushing to develop their own internal codes of conduct, which they say will raise international business ethics to the standard we're accustomed to in the US. Self-policing is not a satisfactory solution, however. Nor is the voluntary code of ethics for multinational businesses drawn up by the State Department and due to be presented to the OECD in its meeting next June. Neither has the binding effect of law.

And the binding effect of law is a deep national interest—but not only to force onto American-based multinationals some rudimentary standards of ethical behavior. In several of the instances of bribery, serious questions of foreign policy are at stake. In the Persian gulf and Arab states, the greasers and the greased have succeeded in creating multiple and competing armed camps, which make them especially prone to war against each other or Israel. In Japan, bribes over many years by Lockheed and others built up the power of Yoshio Kodama, an ultra-right militarist fixer and racketeer for whose survival and power the CIA seems also to have been concerned. Kodama's nefarious influence in Japan is now well known; his past is as tawdry as can be. Lockheed's $7.1 million handout to this thug did more than make one man richer. The airplane manufacturer, perhaps with the consent of the CIA, was making foreign policy in Japan wholly at odds with the one being pursued by the US government as a whole.

What is needed, however, is not always easy to achieve, and it will certainly not be easy to control and stop this pernicious business of bribes disguised as legitimate commissions. In an amendment to the Arms Export Control Act of 1975, Sen. Church proposes that all fees and commissions on arms sales be publicly disclosed, and that company officials who fail to do so be made vulnerable to criminal penalties. A simple enough proposition, it involves the federal government in combatting international bribery. The business community is trying to get this proposal sidetracked. The SEC could also on its own authority oblige American companies doing business abroad to provide much more information about their foreign subsidiaries and other holdings than is currently required. On the other hand, the notion of an international convention against bribery, proposed by Sen. Charles Percy, is a more iffy idea because bribery seems to offend other cultures even less than it has our own.

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Incredulous Italians

Standing Accused

For some 30 years Italians have nurtured two basic beliefs about themselves and the world: that they would stumble, connive and procrastinate their way from one crisis and scandal to another, and that the United States would rescue Italy from the Italians. This last was a particularly cherished conviction, and was held by people with the most diverse political attitudes. Communists believed it because they felt American imperialism could not tolerate the collapse of a central element of NATO's southern flank. Christian Democrats believed it because they were convinced America could risk Italy's "going Communist." Italians in general believed it because they were led to believe that in some vague way an Italian collapse would be very risky for the economic and political stability of the West in general, and to America's goals in particular. Thirty years of generally excellent relations between the two countries reinforced this article of faith.

Now the release of information from three congressional investigating committees has seriously weakened Italians' belief in the good will of the United States. While the information comes from different sources (the Church subcommittees on intelligence and on multinationals and the Pike committee on intelligence), the impact in Italy has been one and one alone: Italian politicians have been accused of corruption by the United States Congress. A highly placed observer in the Italian chamber of deputies spoke the other day of "horrified" deputies in a state of "near shock," wondering what the "unpredictable Americans" would do to them next. Moreover, he said, there was a growing tide of anti-Americanism among those who had been among the United States' most enthusiastic supporters, and he speculated that it would take some time for these passions to run their course. "Can anyone imagine a more schizophrenic country than the United States these days?" He asked, "Has it not become dangerous for us to deal with Americans?"

The most recent accusations to reach Rome are those of the Senate subcommittee on multinational corporations, and deal with the presumed bribery of two Italian defense ministers, Mario Tanassi (a Social Democrat) and Luigi Gui (a Christian Democrat). Both men have initiated legal procedures against newspapers that openly accused them of accepting bribes from Lockheed agents, and Gui has taken a step that is most unusual for an Italian minister accused of involvement in a major scandal: he has resigned, and has himself demanded a judicial inquiry into the matter. In a lengthy conversation in his office, the former minister spoke calmly but with evident emotion about the scandal. "The first thing which shocks an Italian reader of the Church subcommittee report is the incredible patchwork nature of the document, and the incoherence of the charges," he observed. The pages that deal with Gui's presumed involvement in the payoffs are indeed peculiar, for the minister is referred to only as "the previous minister," or "the MOD," and these references have been written into the report in ink into spaces where something previously typed has been cancelled. Moreover, the crucial paragraph contains shifts in tense that render it very difficult to understand: "Early in 1970 Lockheed recognized the necessity for additional special expenses of $78,000 and this amount was to have been paid upon receipt of the letter of intent. These expenses actually were to compensate the previous minister and certain members of his team who are now in the ministry and who will review the contract."

The problem revolves around two words: "team" and "now." In the Italian bureaucracy, ministers bring a very few members of their own "team" with them, and they inevitably leave when the minister does. Hence, it is unthinkable that any of Gui's personal assistants or advisers remained in the ministry of defense when Tanassi (a member of a different party) replaced him in March 1970. Moreover, the word "now" appears to refer to the date of the Lockheed report itself, which seems to be 1971. (This information is surprisingly lacking from the subcommittee report.)

Gui observed that, quite apart from the incoherence of the reference to him, the "charges" of corruption were based entirely on internal Lockheed correspondence, without a shred of evidence that the alleged cash transactions ever took place. All that is known is that Lockheed's agents requested and were given the $78,000 (receipts from the agents are reproduced in the report). The former minister said that he was innocent of the charges, and that he was rather mystified by the entire operation. There were some in Italy, he noted, who suspected that the question had more to do with internal American political struggles than with the much-vaunted American passion to uncover the truth at all costs. Such people, he observed, wondered why the matter of the cancellations and insertions in the report had never been clarified by the subcommittee, or why such obviously damaging documents had been released without an attempt to ascertain if the charges were true.

"The investigation of this Congressional committee has brought about the resignation of the Italian minister of the interior, and this is no small matter in the relations between two countries," Gui pointed out. "It cannot help but affect the mutual trust and esteem which has always existed between our two nations," he said.

Regardless of the quality of the evidence, the Italian and American press have shown little interest in awaiting the results of formal investigations, especially

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since these have rarely produced any substantial results in this country. Yet there is already a hint that the wrong targets may have been singled out. *The Washington Post*, in a story datelined Bonn on February 11, reported that a Lockheed representative in Germany appears to have pocketed a bribe ostensibly intended for German political parties. In Italy, for example, the Lockheed intermediary has simply disappeared. There are now suspicions that at least some "bribed Italians" may never have been bribed at all. A *New York Times* editorial, which, of course, accepted the truth of all of Lockheed's admissions, suggests that American prestige will inevitably suffer as a result of the scandals, as if it were the government that was responsible for the presumed briberies. Instead, the behavior of the Congress, and the "schizophrenia" that Italians now see emanating from Washington, have produced an image abroad of a country that does not have the capacity of leading the Western word. It is not so much the image of a corrupt country as that of a nation unable to make policy. This is particularly clear in the instance of the CIA scandals.

The Pike committee report, much of which has already been leaked to Italian journalists in America, specified that some $66 million had been spent in Italy from 1948 to 1968, in support of non-Communist parties and labor unions. Of this, one million dollars was spent during the elections of 1948 (a sum much smaller than most informed observers had suspected), which produced a substantial victory for De Gasperi's Christian Democrats at the expense of the Communists. While no politicians' names appeared in the report itself, journalists seem to have learned from committee (or government?) sources that CIA funds went not only to the Christian Democrats and other members of governing coalitions (the report says "political parties associated with center or center-left governments"), but also to individual politicians, including the highly respected Social Democrat Giuseppe Saragat "and his faction."

Now, quite aside from the question that here, as in the Lockheed scandal, one is dealing with (highly limited and selected) internal documents, it seems that someone might have attempted to put this spending in context, as the authors of the CIA memoranda tried to do. In justifying the expenditure of $10 million in the parliamentary elections of 1972, the CIA said that "the opposition, apparently heavily financed by Moscow, had scored gains in regional elections and trailed the incumbents by only a few points in the opinion polls." In this context, if would appear to be highly dubious to speak of "corruption," and probably closer to the truth to talk about compensating "emergency campaign funds" of a sort that has been all too common in Italy's postwar history. It has been common to both "sides," not just to an American government that now seems to question whether opposition to Stalinism over the course of the past quarter-century was morally or politically justified. Turin's *La Stampa*, one of the country's most respected publications, was not inclined to regard these funds as either massive (they amounted to less than 10 percent of the expenses of the parties in question) or as corrupting:

> *It seems beyond discussion that the Communist party was assisted by the Soviets, first directly and then through economic enterprises linked with the Soviet Union, and the extreme left in Italy has been supported in various ways by Moscow or by Prague. It would be juvenile to expect that Italian political groups, who were close to Washington by free choice, not for a handful of dollars, refused or failed to solicit aid from the United States. During and following the cold war Italy was at the center of the competition between the two superpowers, and prior to the public financing of the parties they desperately needed funds.*

It is worth observing that there appears to have been little, if any funding of Italian political parties since 1972 on the part of the CIA. If we can believe the latest reports, Kissinger and Ford wanted to send some money last December, but the transfer did not take place.

If the support of non-Communist parties in Italy can be justified in the context of the cold war, the same cannot be said for the $800,000 that Ambassador Graham Martin seems to have given to the shadowy Gen. Vito Miceli, then head of the SID (Defense Intelligence Service) in 1972. This money, which was to be used to aid the campaign and propaganda efforts of the extreme right, was obtained over the vigorous protests of the CIA, whose station chief objected repeatedly to giving money to such suspect and subversive groups. Martin finally got the money after threatening to order the embassy's marine guards to lock the CIA station chief out of the embassy on the Via Veneto, and put him "on the airplane." Events of this sort, it should be noted, do little to damage the reputation of the CIA in Italy, but they confirm the proclivities that the Nixon government had for flirting with groups on the far right. They may also explain in part why the present Secretary of State is so reluctant to open the Pandora's Box of covert American activities in recent years.

Kissinger is quite correct—and recent events in Italy bear him out—that information stemming from congressional investigations severely damages America's relations with many of its allies. But one must also say that attempts by the administration to plug the leaks and "save our friends from embarrassment" have been at least equally counterproductive. Our friends would be better served now by genuinely full disclosure.

One often has the feeling of groping in a wonderland where any accusation can be made, based on mysterious "documents" that are never to be seen

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again. This is the case, for example, of a recent book on CIA activities in Italy in the postwar period written by two Italian Communist journalists. Based on some recently declassified material and other documents released through the Freedom of Information Act, the book provides little in the way of dramatic new revelations. However, launched to coincide with the Pike committee leaks, it tarnishes several otherwise distinguished reputations and adds to the overall view of an America determined to undermine its own policies. Luigi Barzini is charged in the book with having participated in a secret CIA group in 1948, while he claims the organization was a public committee funded by the Marshall Plan in order to promote and publicize the Plan. One would like to check such charges, as well as those against the Italian politicians "named" in the Pike report, but it does not seem to be possible. When the National Archives was asked recently to provide copies of the documents shown to the two journalists, its staff replied that since several of the documents had been mistakenly declassified, they were now no longer available.

The anti-American elements of the Italian press have not hesitated to take the leaks of the congressional committees as gospel, while those accused find it impossible to defend themselves. Two Communist journalists are permitted to see important documents, which are then denied to those who wish to check them. Italian newspapers carry translations of the Pike report, and American newsmen in Rome find it impossible to get a copy from the embassy. Indeed, as recently as February 12, the embassy had not even received a copy of the Lockheed documents released by the Church subcommittee. It would seem that the administration's penchant for secrecy is, in this case, far more damaging to our friends than to our friends' enemies.

The continued refusal to "go public" on the history of American activities in Italy guarantees that the very important discussion of the future role of the Italian Communist party will be based on mythology, rather than history. If it is true, as the Communists claim, that they have become a democratic party, to whom should the credit go for this remarkable transformation? Should it not go in large part to the United States and to the forces of the Italian center and non-Communist left who for 30 years opposed a monolithic and Stalinist PCI? Is the "new face" of communism in Western Europe not a tribute to the success of a policy that is today the object of scorn and—unbelievably—embarrassment in Washington?

Michael Ledeen and Claire Sterling

Mr. Ledeen is an American historian teaching in Rome. *Ms. Sterling* is an American correspondent in Rome.

The Wallace Message From Massachusetts

Middleboro, Mass.

Alabama's George C. Wallace has taken dead aim at Massachusetts' reputation as the most "liberal" state among the 50 and, judging by the huge crowds he's drawing from one corner of the state to the other, he may hit the bull's-eye March 2. He's acutely aware of the significance that will be read into it; in fact, he talks to his audiences about it in an almost casual tone. If Massachusetts, the only state to go for George McGovern in 1972, gives him a "good vote," it will send tremors throughout the political establishment.

If it happens, it will be almost in spite of Wallace himself. He's a bit intimidated by the state, tucked away as it is in the far northeast, nourished by such papers as *The New York Times* and *The Boston Globe* (both of which he regularly ridicules), the homeland of fancy prep schools and Harvard University. As late as the Christmas holidays, his aides complained they'd been unable to get a firm commitment from him to campaign heavily in the state. He'd skipped it in 1972 and drew only eight percent of the vote. One suggested at the time that Wallace was a little "lazy"; however, campaigning is what he lives for, the one drive that wasn't extinguished when he was shot down in a shopping center in suburban Maryland.

It's obvious a lot of people, including Wallace, have been misreading the reasons Massachusetts stayed with McGovern in '72. That year, the bulk of its huge working class vote couldn't bring itself to pull a lever next to the name of Richard M. Nixon, the old nemesis of the state's royal clan, and next to the label "Republican," a religious-cultural anathema to Boston's Irish community. Neither reason has a lot to do with the resentments and frustrations gnawing at the white working class in late February of 1976.

The easy answer to the Wallace phenomenon threatening the status quo of Massachusetts politics today is busing. It has upset the working class, well over half the registered Democrats in the state. It has compounded workers' feelings of helplessness in the face of the power of the courts and the impotence of politicians. It has driven some to violence. The usual assumption is that busing orders are causing people to flock to Wallace rallies in such numbers that he sometimes has to repeat his performance for the hundreds waiting outside. It may be that busing is the last straw for the white working class. But that is far from the whole answer.

Wallace has something no other candidate on either ticket has—a cultural affinity with the working class. He senses, instinctively, how much it can take before resentments explode, how sensitivities have been rubbed raw by the intellectuals on the "left" and the

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country club set on the "right." Both pour a little balm on the wounds now and then. Wallace salts them.

Example: Wallace scores big with an anecdote illustrating his views on foreign policy. He reminds his audiences that India has received $10 billion in foreign aid since it won its independence but that when the US pulled out of South Vietnam, Indira Gandhi said she was glad the "imperialists" had been forced out. A diplomat from India came to see him, Wallace relates, and told him India doesn't like some of his foreign policy views. "I told him if I became President and India came looking for another handout, I'd tell them to go to Vietnam and get it." He fairly shouts. When Wallace hits a raw nerve, the response begins like thunder rolling from the rear of the crowd, and reaches a roar. He gets that response with the Gandhi story.

A similar response occurs when Wallace tells his crowds that this country has to "deal from strength" in its relations with the Soviets. He doesn't hedge or qualify his comments; he just puts it out the way they like it.

It has been the mean hope of some Wallace critics that working class concern about a man's physical prowess, in bed or at the lectern, will cost Wallace votes as he's seen wheeled in and out in a paraplegic's chair. Wallace's managers have dealt with this in the simplest of ways—by employing electronics. He travels with his own podium, a square structure of brown wood a few feet high topped off with another foot or so of bullet proof glass. Two microphones cut through the center to mouth level when Wallace is wheeled in. Four speakers, two on each side of the stage, complete the apparatus. The first, deceptive impression one gets when he starts to speak is of a powerful, robust man with a mighty voice.

Wallace is using a soft-sell on Massachusetts, seeking out ways to identify with the predominately Catholic working class audiences he draws. He recalls that Massachusetts and seven Southern states (Alabama was one) voted for Al Smith in 1928. He tells people that he, himself, voted for Jack Kennedy for Vice President on the second ballot in 1956, reminds them that Alabama stuck with the ticket in 1960 and helped elect Massachusetts' favorite son.

This year's speech is a new one, at least in Massachusetts. The theme has Wallace verging toward the mainstream of his party without taking out the sting of his criticism of big government. The issues, he says, are "inflation and unemployment" and he accuses the Washington types of failing to deal with those issues because they're too busy dreaming up new "social experimentations" (a euphemism for busing?). Thus, he charges they have their priorities out of whack. He treads lightly on the welfare issue, possibly because he's aware Massachusetts has a high welfare load and not all of the recipients are black. He attacks the "freeloaders," says "you know who they are" and complains that the freeloaders use up all the welfare money so that, when the deserving working class needs a little help, there's none left.

The press is still a favorite target, a ploy really to deflect criticism of his own record in Alabama. Wallace tells his people the tax system is "so regressive," says the middle class is paying for the "super rich and those who won't work," spits out the names of the Rockefeller, Ford, Mellon and Carnegie foundations as he insists they, too, should pay taxes. "They're the ones who devise all these programs you have to pay for," he says. His finishing touch is a bit of information on Alabama's tax structure, which, next to Massachusetts, seems like a dream world. Alabama's sales tax is four cents on the dollar, less than half that of Massachusetts. He recites figures on Alabama's average property taxes—$35 per year on a $10,000 home, $95 per year on a $20,000 home. It draws gasps from a crowd paying many times that. What about the critics who say "we don't have all the goodies they have in other places? We let the people keep their money and buy their own goodies." Big applause.

There are clues that Wallace is running strong. Take the rallies. Little organizing goes into them. His managers rarely do more than rent the biggest hall in town and saturate radio and TV with spot announcements; the crowds pour out. It's safe to say they wouldn't do that for the other candidates. The further away from Boston he gets, the bigger the crowds. Wallace's hopes ride with the white working class and that's where he's going for his rallies—to the suburbs stretching south from Boston to Fall River and New Bedford and north to Lowell and Lawrence and to outstate industrial centers such as Springfield, Worcester and the Fitchburg-Leominster area. This is where he finds the core of his strength but his managers claim to be pleased at the good response in little towns such as Middleboro, a center of cranberry farming and processing. About one out of seven registered voters turned out for him there.

George Wallace's only real competition for the blue collar vote is Henry M. (Scoop) Jackson. To compete with Wallace, Jackson has made a big issue of his opposition to forced busing and his support of a strong military. That has gained him the support of leaders in both organized labor and the anti-busing community. But is this the year the voters are going to play follow the labor leader? No one outside the Jackson camp thinks it is.

Neither Wallace nor his managers are talking about a big win. His manager in the state insists "anything over eight percent is a victory." That's ridiculous.His opposition has lately been predicting he'd get 20 to 25 percent. That would give Wallace several delegates from each of the 12 congressional districts under the proportional representation plan. He may do still better, much better.

Paul R. Wieck

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The Media Campaign

Driving between home and the factory at shift-change time, New Hampshire mill workers hear the tick-tocking of a grandfather clock on their car radios. "Time," says the announcer. "Time is passing. America is waiting. Waiting for the past 30 years for a national health insurance program . . ." Or waiting for inflation to subside or unemployment to go down. In this instance, the man America is waiting for is Morris K. Udall, one in a bunch of Democrats competing for votes in this week's New Hampshire primary.

That commercial and a dozen others were fashioned for Udall by a man named Merv Weston, who runs an advertising agency in Manchester, New Hampshire. Weston understands that "drive time" radio commercials are beamed at the half-listening ear; people aren't really listening to their radios as they drive—or do housework—and to capture their attention, a commercial or "spot" has to be properly framed. Thus, the slow, deliberate ticking of a metronome.

Weston's agency is the largest in the state, but his real vocation he gets to practice just once every four years—helping one Democrat or another win the New Hampshire primary. Weston was with McCarthy in 1968 and McGovern in 1972; both came in second, but each left the state with greater stature than when he began. This year, at one time or another, five of the early starting Democrats called Weston—Walter Mondale, Fred Harris, Henry Jackson, Terry Sanford, and Udall, and recently he heard from Stanley Arnold who is also on the ballot in New Hampshire.

Radio and TV have become the most dominant forces in political advertising. Television, it is said, provides direct access to peoples' minds, and Roger Ailes, Richard Nixon's television adviser in 1968, claims that no candidate will ever again be elected without the medium's help. Electronic media have also become the largest consumers of political money; in 1968, all candidates and parties spent about $89 million on television and radio.

In the years since TV advertising became a prevalent form of political communication in the 1950s, politicians have learned its uses and its deficiencies. For instance, it is clear that TV blitzes work much better in primaries, where building recognition is important, than they do in general elections where issues and experience are of greater consequence. On the other hand, no amount of money spent on radio and television can guarantee votes. Rep. Wilbur Mills spent $80,000 on media in New Hampshire in 1972—compared to Muskie's $65,000—and got 4.1 percent of the vote.

Most Americans are never exposed to the first wave of advertising fashioned by presidential candidates and their media advisers, those radio and television commercials designed for special appeal in the early primaries. These spots, and some of the candidates themselves, are discarded long before the national conventions, so most of us missed seeing Edmund Muskie speaking from a barber chair as his hair was being trimmed and never heard Robert Kennedy—identified only as "a familiar voice from the past"—extoll George McGovern's courage in 1972. Advertising prepared for use in New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Florida reflects the collective talents of candidates, political strategists, pollsters and advertising executives from all over the country. The packaging tells us something about how the candidates view themselves and us. The advertising implicitly reflects each candidate's problems in the upcoming primaries and the image each is fashioning to meet those problems.

For the past two weeks, I have been watching television spots, listening to radio commercials, reading over scripts, examining newspaper ads, and talking to campaign managers and media advisers to evaluate the advertising strategies of each campaign in both parties for the first three primaries. Here—this week—is what the Democrats are saying and what they claim they are trying to accomplish.

Among Democrats, the main problem facing every candidate except George Wallace is to become known and to break out of the pack. Polls from the early primary states have consistently shown many voters to be unfamiliar with the candidates and what they stand for, and, therefore unsure about whom to vote for. Nearly every candidate's media program addresses this problem in some way. The most direct uncomplicated approach is taken by Henry Jackson. Each of Jackson's television, radio and newspaper advertisements poses four questions. On television, for example, it goes like this: "Who did the big oil companies attack with newspaper ads because he fought to keep prices down?" Then, as the camera pans the faces of various other candidates, the announcer's voice continues: "Udall? Shriver? Bayh? Harris? Wallace? Sanford? Shapp? Carter?" [cut to Henry Jackson's picture] "Nope, Senator Scoop Jackson." The technique is repetitive. Other questions are asked (Whose amendment helped thousands flee Eastern Europe for freedom in the West? Who authored most of the landmark legislation to protect our environment? Which candidate insists that we stop exporting our jobs to Russia?) and each time the rest of the field is quickly eliminated in favor of Scoop Jackson. According to a Jackson media spokesman, Hal Pearson, reusing the identical message in every medium is reinforcing: "When you see it or hear it, you recognize it from another medium and it sinks in."

When the advertising program was being planned, Jackson's advisers had to grapple with the problem of whether to run him as "Scoop" or "Henry M." In 1972,

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facing the same question, they opted to violate one of the fundamental conventions of political advertising—that the candidate's name in all media should look exactly as it does in the voting booth—and chose Scoop. That winter, billboards sprouted along Florida freeways proclaiming, "Vote for Scoop," creating some genuine confusion about what a scoop was. "This year," says Pearson, "we faced the same problem and there were definitely two points of view inside the campaign. Some people felt that perhaps 'Scoop' wasn't sufficiently presidential. We finally decided that his nickname was generally perceived positively and he's certainly better known as Scoop than Henry M. Besides," Pearson adds, "'Ike' never hurt Eisenhower."

The candidate who is apparently taking the most risks to break out of the pack is late-starting Birch Bayh. In a year when politicians and government are not thought to be in good odor, Bayh is taking a different tack from his competitors. His television commercials consist of Bayh and Bayh alone looking directly into the television camera, which gradually moves closer to him as he speaks:

"To listen to the other candidates, none of them are politicians. Even the ones who've held public office say they're not politicians. Well, I'm Birch Bayh—and I'm a politician. It took a *good* politician to stop Nixon's plan to pack the Supreme Court. And it's going to take a good politician to break up the big oil companies . . . to get jobs for unemployed workers . . . and hold food prices in line. The question isn't whether you're a politician, but what kind of politician you are. Because it takes a good politician to make a good President."

For Bayh, this is something of a gamble. Tony Schwartz, the audio expert on dozens of political campaigns and the creator of more than 5000 radio and television spots, says "Politician is a negative word and tends to group with others like 'landlord,' 'tax collector,' 'meter maid,' 'salesman,' etc., in the public's ear." This year "politician" seems to rank just above "rapist."

Perhaps it is a fair measure of its potential effectiveness, but Bayh's approach is not highly thought of in the other campaigns. John Marttila, a Boston based campaign consultant who is helping Udall, thinks it is misdirected: "I'd run it in reverse," says Marttila. "I'd have him saying, 'I'm a politician and I'm embarrassed. We've failed you.'" Hal Pearson says, "It's not really a high risk approach; it's contrived high risk. The Bayh approach is an effort to make an issue out of something—'politicians'—that is not really an issue. It's a contrivance to make Bayh stand out in the crowd."

Bayh himself says he's comfortable with the approach because it is forthright and honest, and he expects to earn the respect of the voters on those grounds.

One of the other rules of effective use of politicial media is to identify a candidate's specific problems and determine which ones can be solved through advertising. In the case of Morris Udall, the problem seemed to be the absence of a firm public image. In Iowa's early caucuses, for example, where Udall spent more money than anyone else and ran fourth, each of the candidates who placed ahead of him seemed to have a sharper public image. Jimmy Carter, who won, was the southern governor who could beat George Wallace. Birch Bayh came across as the most electable liberal, the candidate acceptable to all factions of the Democratic party. Fred Harris, of course, was the populist. Who was Mo Udall?

Udall's managers, recalling Watergate, believed that the central issue in choosing a president ought to be the character of the man, and, in a crowded field with little ability to differentiate among the candidates on the basis of issues, that their man would stack up well if they could find a way to communicate "character." To do this, they began with two political endorsements and waged a major advertising campaign around them. The first endorsement was by former Special Watergate Prosecutor Archibald Cox. The press conference at which Cox made his statement was filmed, later to be edited and made into 60-second radio and television spots, and portions of Cox's remarks were carried in full page advertisements in *The New York Times* and *The Boston Globe*. A week later, Ramsey Clark's endorsement of Udall also ran in the *Globe*.

The message in each case was character. On radio and television, Cox's familiar voice rasps: "Trust in government is not to be had for the asking, nor is it gained by the politics of image. It begins with the trust that those who govern repose in the people. Only a man of character can restore that confidence. Only a man of openness and courage can bring us together."

"The going in the White House is always rough," says the Ramsey Clark headline. "Only character holds in the storm. Mo Udall has character." The Cox endorsement was unquestionably effective, and well aimed. "Among the people who are going to be voting in Democractic primaries this year, Archibald Cox is the closest thing there is to a bona fide national hero," says the campaign manager of another Democrat.

Bayh's media man, Tony Isadore, expressed a contrary point of view: "It's exploitative of another man's heroism," he contends. "I like Cox tremendously for what he did, but for him to turn around and tell me who to vote for is like an astronaut telling me to buy a certain kind of dessert. . ."

The Cox ads ran in both New Hampshire and Massachusetts, but none of New Hampshire's voters saw the Ramsey Clark endorsement. "He's viewed as too liberal up here," says one of Udall's New Hampshire organizers. "We'd just as soon play that one down."

George Wallace is a Democratic contender with a different kind of problem. He is already sorted out of the pack; his image is well established; people know where he stands on the issues. In doubt, however, is the extent to which his partial paralysis and other physical

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disabilities will impair his capacity to meet the demands of the presidency. Wallace's health has been the subject of continual press speculation, rekindled recently when the governor suffered a knee injury when his wheelchair was dropped, causing him to suspend campaigning for a day and, once more, to find himself the subject of front-page news coverage and editorial comment.

In an effort to deal with this problem in their own terms, the Wallace campaign has put together a 30-second television spot and a 30-minute film. In both, Wallace is shown playing wheelchair football with a group of youngsters on the lawn of the governor's mansion in Montgomery. Wallace hands-off a football to one of the kids, throws a ball to another, and, squinting into the sun, catches a pass. Throughout this action, an announcer's voice assures that Wallace is in excellent health. The spot's final "tag line" designed to stick in the viewer's mind: "George Wallace's health will not keep him out of the White House."

The Wallace organization will spend in the neighborhood of a quarter of a million dollars running these ads in Massachusetts and Florida. Here again, the objective is reinforcement; they are not designed to "convert" voters. But just as people tend to read advertisements for products they already own for reassurance, Wallace hopes to reach those already disposed to vote for him and lay to rest any doubts on the health issue that might cause them to shift their vote elsewhere or stay home.

Fred Harris' spots are mostly straight Harris and straight economics. Standing outside a shut-down factory in New Hampshire, Harris deplores "the worst unemployment in this country since the Great Depression." In another 30-second spot, he calls for a breaking-up of "these oil companies that are illegally and vertically integrated . . . controlling production, refining and marketing."

"We try to avoid giving a staged look," says Frank Greer, Harris' media adviser. The Harris films were made by Glen Pearcy who recently won an academy award nomination for his documentary on Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers, and there is ample "setting" in his five-minute spot which mixes biographical material with issues. Harris is shown, for example, in the abandoned Oklahoma farmhouse where he lived as a first-grader as the announcer describes him as "the son of a sharecropper who worked as a migrant worker as a child . . . someone who understands the concerns of working people." Background music for all of Harris' spots are the strains of Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land."

Jimmy Carter's media advisers decided to do a few longer commercials, two-minute and five-minute television spots, to go with their regular radio advertising. "We did this," says aide Gerald Rafshoon, "to expose Jimmy in more depth, especially in caucus states." Longer spots also have other advantages; they are cheaper and there are just so many places where they can be fit in. Television stations are required by law to offer equal time to all political candidates able to buy it, at the lowest rates offered to their best commercial customers. Obviously, they will not chop five minute segments out of prime-time evening viewing, so the tendency is to sell those time slots as "news adjacencies," abbreviating slightly their news programming. Also, it costs less to buy TV time in longer segments. "In Iowa we could get five minutes on the 'Today' show for $75," says Rafshoon.

ews adjacencies might not be prime advertising targets if you were marketing detergents, toys, or pantyhose, but for political candidates, news programs provides a convenient distillation of audience—people aware and concerned about public issues—and a higher ratio of probable voters per dollar cost than one can get by advertising on "The Waltons." As a result, several other candidates are following Carter's lead and making special five-minute programs spots.

A few years ago, there was a general agreement that longer spots were preferred for political campaigns as more likely to be substantial and issue oriented, and less likely to embody slick Madison Avenue merchandising. John Gardner asked the National Association of Broadcasters to impose a five-minute minimum on political advertising, and some stations adopted a policy of permitting no political advertising shorter than that. This year, the techniques used in the Carter spots have caused some media experts to argue a contrary point of view. Hal Pearson, Sen. Jackson's media adviser notes: "Thirty seconds is the standard length of time that a viewer is accustomed to concentrating on and tuning out of a television commercial. Carter is not using the longer period of time to stress facts and issues; they are selling personality and image. They are doing the same thing in five minutes that you do in one minute."

Whatever the merits of length, Jimmy Carter's television and radio spots are probably the most sophisticated currently running on the Democratic side. To be sure they are image builders and they promote personality: Carter is pictured at a fair, in a supermarket, at a barbecue with bluegrass music, kneeling in a field on his farm, climbing a conveyor belt to check his peanuts, talking to blacks, addressing the Georgia legislature, in his peanut warehouse, in a denim shirt, in a checked shirt, working, playing, and so on. The spots also play off a consistent anti-Washington theme—Carter: "We have absolutely no leadership in Washington . . . The other candidates are going around New Hampshire promising tax reform when they've been serving in Washington for years and have created the tax mess we have now . . . I don't think a lot of our Washington officials understand what it means to work for a living . . . We now have in the federal government the worst, most confused, bloated, overlapping and wasteful bureaucracy that human

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beings have ever created." But they also show the candidate speaking for himself, and Carter's radio and television advertising is the most explicit, direct and issue oriented of any candidate's in either party. As an example, here is Carter explaining his ideas on money management in a 60-second spot: "With a new budgeting technique called zero based budgeting, we eliminated [in the state government in Georgia] all the old obsolescent programs, put into effect long range goals and planning and cut administrative costs more than 50 percent, and shifted that money and that service toward giving better government services to our people. Zero based budgeting is the best management tool I have ever seen. You require every program that spends the taxpayer's money to rejustify itself annually and you have an automatic reassessment of priorities so you phase out the old programs automatically and you just have the new programs financed every time."

Some have taken issue with the claims made by Jimmy Carter about the gains made during his administration in Georgia and the feasibility of his management concepts. But it has been a long time since a presidential candidate attempted to advance ideas of this complexity in such specific terms on advertising time purchased with his own campaign dollars.

That's what the candidates look and sound like after they've been packaged by the ad agencies. The media campaign sets the tone of the contest, and its content. I'll leave it to you to decide (to paraphrase former FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson) whether they are molesting the minds of America's voters.

Ken Bode

A New Route to Reform

Taxing Consumption

by Martin S. Feldstein

Despite the continual efforts of tax reformers for more than two decades, our income tax law still permits some of those who enjoy the most affluent consumption to pay little or no tax. Through capital gains, tax exempt municipal bond interest and "paper" losses on tax shelter activities, the rich are able to reduce their taxable income and increase their personal consumption. And the inequities of our current tax system will continue until the goal of tax reform is redefined.

A growing number of economists now favor substituting a progressive tax on personal consumption for the current income tax. Although such a change would have little effect on taxes paid by most families, it would force all of those who enjoy a high standard of consumption to pay their fair share of taxes. It would also eliminate many anomalies in the current tax law while encouraging certain forms of saving. Moreover, administering a progressive consumption tax such as the one described below would be easier than operating our current income tax. While the switch to tax consumption would not be without problems, it is time to refocus the energies of tax reform on this new goal.

When the basic structure of our current income tax law was designed more than 60 years ago, it was intended to raise a very limited amount of revenue. The maximum rate of tax was seven percent and was applicable only to very high incomes. With such low rates there was little incentive to rearrange income in order to reduce taxes and little scope for serious inequities. Even during the decade before World War II only about four percent of families paid any income tax at all and the median tax rate for these high income families was less than five percent! Today nearly 500,000 taxpayers pay marginal tax rates of 50 percent or more. These high rates are incentive enough for people to manipulate economic activities in order to substitute untaxed income for taxed income and thus give rise to inequities.

The basic problems with the current tax system arise in the taxation of capital income and in the treatment of accumulation. The special treatment of capital gains is the most important way in which tax law reduces the obligation of the wealthy. When stocks or other assets are sold, the gain is taxed at half of the usual tax rate or

Martin S. Feldstein is professor of economics at Harvard.

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less. Anyone who finances his consumption primarily by selling assets, as many of the rich do, will pay much lower taxes than someone who finances that same standard of living out of ordinary income. The low rate of tax on capital gains is only part of the favorable treatment of capital gains. Because no tax is due on an appreciating stock or other asset until it is sold, the wealthy pay no tax on this form of saving. In contrast, those whose income consists only of wages or salary save out of after-tax dollars (except for limited employer pension contributions) and pay tax on each year's interest. The deferral of the tax on capital gains until the asset is sold substantially raises the net rate of return that asset holders can earn. It has been estimated that deferral reduces the effective tax rate on capital gains to less than 10 percent.

The tax wise investor can do even better by borrowing to finance his consumption while holding appreciating assets with which ultimately to repay the debt. The interest that he pays is a tax deduction that immediately reduces the tax that he must pay on his other income. In contrast, the taxes on his capital gains are due only when the assets are sold. Moreover, no tax is due on any gain if the individual dies before selling the asset. If his estate sells the asset and pays his debt, the individual and his estate completely escape all tax on the consumption that he enjoyed.

An example will show how the powerful subsidy of leveraged investment works in practice. Consider a man with a $50,000 salary, common stock worth $500,000 and a bank loan of $200,000 secured by the stock. The stock will produce dividends of about $20,000, approximately equal to the interest on the loan; as a result, there is no tax on the dividends. Although the change in share prices varies from year to year, the average experience of the past 25 years suggests a gain of 5 percent or $25,000 on his $500,000 of stock. No tax is due on this gain unless the shares are sold. By borrowing an additional $25,000 from the bank, the individual can consume his gains without any increase in tax.

Real estate investments are another important device for financing consumption without paying tax. In a typical real estate investment, the accounting depreciation allows the investor to receive his net rental income untaxed and to offset some of the tax liability on his other income. This accounting depreciation is allowed as a tax deduction even if the property is actually increasing in value. When and if the property is sold, the capital gain is taxed at a favorable low rate. And the investor can avoid even this tax by refinancing his mortgage instead of selling his property.

This combination of borrowing, artificial accounting losses and untaxed capital appreciation is the common feature of tax shelters in such diverse activities as oil drilling, cattle feeding and low-income housing. In every case, the investor seeks to reduce his total tax bill and increase his own consumption.

Why have obviously unfair features of our tax system been allowed to persist? Certainly not because tax reformers have failed to make Congress aware of them. Inequities survive in part because it is difficult, if not impossible, to eliminate them within the framework of our current income tax without at the same time creating new and equally serious problems. For example, the low rate of tax on capital gains is retained because it provides an incentive to socially productive portfolio investment, because it is at least a crude adjustment for inflation, and because the proceeds of such sales are generally reinvested. The deferred taxation on capital gains until assets are sold is required by the practical difficulty of revaluing all capital assets each year. The abuses that result from borrowing are difficult to stop in our tax system because borrowing does not give rise to income even when it finances consumption. Although piecemeal solutions for some of the current problems could be developed within the existing tax system, doing so would only complicate tax laws even further and might introduce new sources of inequity.

The proper remedy lies in a more general reform of the tax system to base tax liabilities directly on consumption so that the intractable problems of measuring income are effectively avoided. Under a consumption tax there would also be no rationale for special tax rates for capital gains, for the exemption of consumption financed by municipal bond interest, or for any of the myriad of other provisions that currently favor wealthy taxpayers.

The idea that everyone's tax should depend on how much he consumes, regardless of how that consumption is financed, appeals strongly to our sense of fairness. Although this principle has not been fully incorporated into our tax law, it is honored in part by the special treatment of pensions: current income that is contributed to a pension plan by an employer is specifically excluded from taxable income. By exempting pension saving, and what is saved when the value of assets increases, our tax law goes part way toward the goal of taxing only consumption. But the system exempts only part of the savings from wage and salary income and fails to tax the consumption financed by borrowing and capital appreciation.

A progressive consumption tax would be surprisingly easy to implement. To calculate "taxable consumption," the taxpayer would add all of his receipts and subtract his additions to saving and investment. In addition, his business expenses and certain personal deductions that are not regarded as ordinary consumption (like the current deductions for casualty losses and medical expenses) would be subtracted. For households that currently use the standard deduction and the simplified "short form," no change would be required. Wealthy households would however be forced to pay tax on the receipts from borrowing and from the sale of

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assets if they are used to finance consumption. Only when such finds are reinvested would they be subtracted in calculating taxable consumption. Moreover, the accounting losses like accelerated depreciation and depletion that currently reduce taxable income but not the cash flow available for consumption would not be deductible.

The switch to such a cash-flow consumption tax would thus eliminate the fundamental inequity in our current tax system. By basing taxes on consumption, everyone who enjoys a high standard of living would pay a correspondingly high tax. Any two taxpayers with the same spending on personal consumption would pay the same tax, regardless of the way in which that income was financed.

Economists have long favored the consumption tax for another reason as well. Our current income tax lowers the rate of return on savings and thus distorts everyone's choice between consuming today and saving for a higher level of consumption in the future. Because the income tax takes away some of the potential reward for saving, everyone is made worse off. The consumption tax would eliminate this wasteful distortion.

A switch to a consumption tax is likely to increase the nation's rate of saving. With more saving available, our rate of investment would rise and our capital stock would grow larger. This increase in the amount of capital per worker would increase productivity and therefore raise real wage rates. Workers as a whole would therefore gain indirectly as well as directly from this tax reform.

Inflation increases the attractiveness of the consumption tax. Inflation is the source of a great many problems and inequities in our current income tax because inflation makes it difficult to measure the real income earned on savings and investments. Consider for example what happens to the interest on savings deposits. Interest rates have risen substantially in the past decade as a result of the accelerating rate of inflation. The higher interest rate compensates depositors for the loss in purchasing power of the money they have on deposit. However, the compensation is not complete because part of this inflation premium is taxed away. Even the lucky saver who has been able to earn an interest rate equal to the seven percent average inflation during the past five years will have seen the real value of his savings decline because he has paid a tax even though he has had no real income. The effect of inflation on the taxation of capital gains and business profits is even more complex. The relation between taxes and real income (*i.e.*, income after adjusting for the effects of inflation on money assets and liabilities) differs greatly from what Congress intended when it wrote the tax law. Individuals with the same real income can pay vastly different income taxes in an inflationary economy. None of the ambiguity of evaluating income carries over to measuring consumption. The consumption tax thus eliminates the problems and inequities that inflation brings to our current income tax.

A consumption tax would also be a more effective instrument of macro-economic policy than our current income tax. A temporary cut in the consumption tax would stimulate demand in two ways. A fall in tax collections increases disposable income and thus increases consumption. (This is the mechanism by which our current income tax cuts are intended to operate.) In addition, a temporary cut in the rate of consumption tax would lower the net cost of current purchases relative to future purchases. This would tend to speed up the purchase of consumer durables, thus helping the consumption goods industries that are usually hardest hit in a recession and that income tax cuts are least effective in helping.

The consumption tax has been rapidly gaining supporters among economists and tax experts. But there are still some who fear a consumption tax would be insufficiently progressive or would fail to provide an adequate check on the accumulation and enjoyment of wealth. I think these fears are not justified. Consider first the concern that the consumption tax will not be adequately progressive. This view reflects in part a confusion between a progressive consumption tax collected from individuals and a proportional excise tax on consumer goods. Historically, the only consumption taxes in the United States have been proportional excise taxes; the value added tax now used as a major source of revenue by most European countries is also an excise tax. But the individual consumption tax can be every bit as progressive as the current income tax and even more progressive.

Changing the tax base from the current taxable income to cash flow net of savings without changing tax rates would affect individual tax liabilities in two countervailing ways. By closing many of the current loopholes, the switch to a consumption tax would increase tax liabilities. The deduction for saving would however lower taxes. Both effects would be relatively larger at high incomes than at low incomes. The current progressivity could probably be maintained with relatively small changes in the current tax rates at each income level.

The consumption tax can do more than match the *average* rate of progressivity of the current income tax. As I emphasized above, our current tax law allows some of those with the highest standard of living to pay little or no tax. In contrast, a progressive consumption tax would eliminate these opportunities and force those with high levels of personal consumption to pay a correspondingly high personal tax.

The consumption tax would also be an implicit tax on current wealth. Nicholas Kaldor, a distinguished British economist and a leading economic adviser of the Labour party, has urged Britain to adopt a consumption tax as an effective way of taxing those who support a

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high lifestyle on the basis of inherited wealth. Wealthy taxpayers in America who finance extravagant spending by capital gains on accumulated wealth, by investing in tax exempt municipal bonds, by borrowing against their wealth, or by investments that yield tax-sheltered income would find that these tax privileges now conferred by wealth would be eliminated by a consumption tax.

Some critics of the consumption tax dislike the deduction of savings because it allows individuals to accumulate wealth more easily. But why is this a problem? The accumulated wealth will be taxed whenever it is used to finance personal consumption. Moreover, if it is given or bequeathed to others, it will also be subject to the gift and estate taxes and then, when it is spent, to a further tax on consumption. I find it difficult to understand why the critics are worried more about the accumulation of new wealth within individual lifetimes under a consumption tax than about the untaxed consumption supported by inherited wealth under the current income tax.

The concern about the accumulation of substantial wealth reflects the fact that money confers power in our society. This concern with the accumulation of power is no doubt the primary reason why many supporters of the consumption tax also favor introducing a progressive tax on wealth above a very high exclusion like $500,000 or one million dollars. The current income tax attempts to tax wealth indirectly by taxing the income from wealth, but it is clearly a very poor substitute for a tax aimed at the power conveyed by wealth: the tax rate on capital income depends on the amount of wage and salary income, there is no exclusion to focus the tax on the power conveyed by large fortunes, and there are ample opportunities to avoid the tax. Indeed, many of the devices for reducing income tax liabilities are available only to those with sufficient wealth! By contrast, the consumption tax effectively reduces the real value of wealth by requiring that a tax be paid whenever the wealth is spent. If a more direct limit on the accumulation and transmission of large fortunes is desired, the solution lies not in the income tax but in the reform of the estate and gift taxes and in the introduction of a tax on wealth.

The switch to a consumption tax would not eliminate all of the problems of our current law. An ambiguous line between personal consumption and business expense—entertainment, travel, the company car, etc.—will be the same source of abuse under the consumption tax as it is under the income tax. A subsidy to homeowners is also likely to continue under a consumption tax. The process of transition from the income tax to the consumption tax would involve additional difficulties. But it would be worth grappling with them to achieve the advantages of a consumption tax. The redirection of tax reform will require widespread public and political debate and careful legal analysis. The universal discontent with our current tax law should provide the necessary impetus. An election year is a good time to begin.

Ford's Failure to Follow Through on Nixon's Initiative

Who Lost Our China Policy?

by Thomas L. Hughes

In a recent issue of the *Ladies Home Journal*, ex-President Nixon complained "we have very little leadership in our country today." The groundswell is still imperceptible for his return to Washington, but he will undoubtedly bask in the fervor of his return to Peking. Indeed Mao's invitation and Nixon's acceptance both stand as not-so-subtle accusations of faulty follow-through on the high drama of the first visit of four years ago. With Mao and Nixon practicing togetherness again in the Forbidden City, the man who for a generation curdled American politics with his cries of "Who lost China?" now has a more legitimate question to ask. This time he can address it to his own two appointees, President Ford and Secretary Kissinger, and the question is: "Who lost our China policy?"

Four years ago in February, 1972, Peking was the scene of Nixon's and Kissinger's greatest triumph. It

Thomas L. Hughes is president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a former Assistant Secretary of State. His views here do not necessarily represent those of the Carnegie Endowment.

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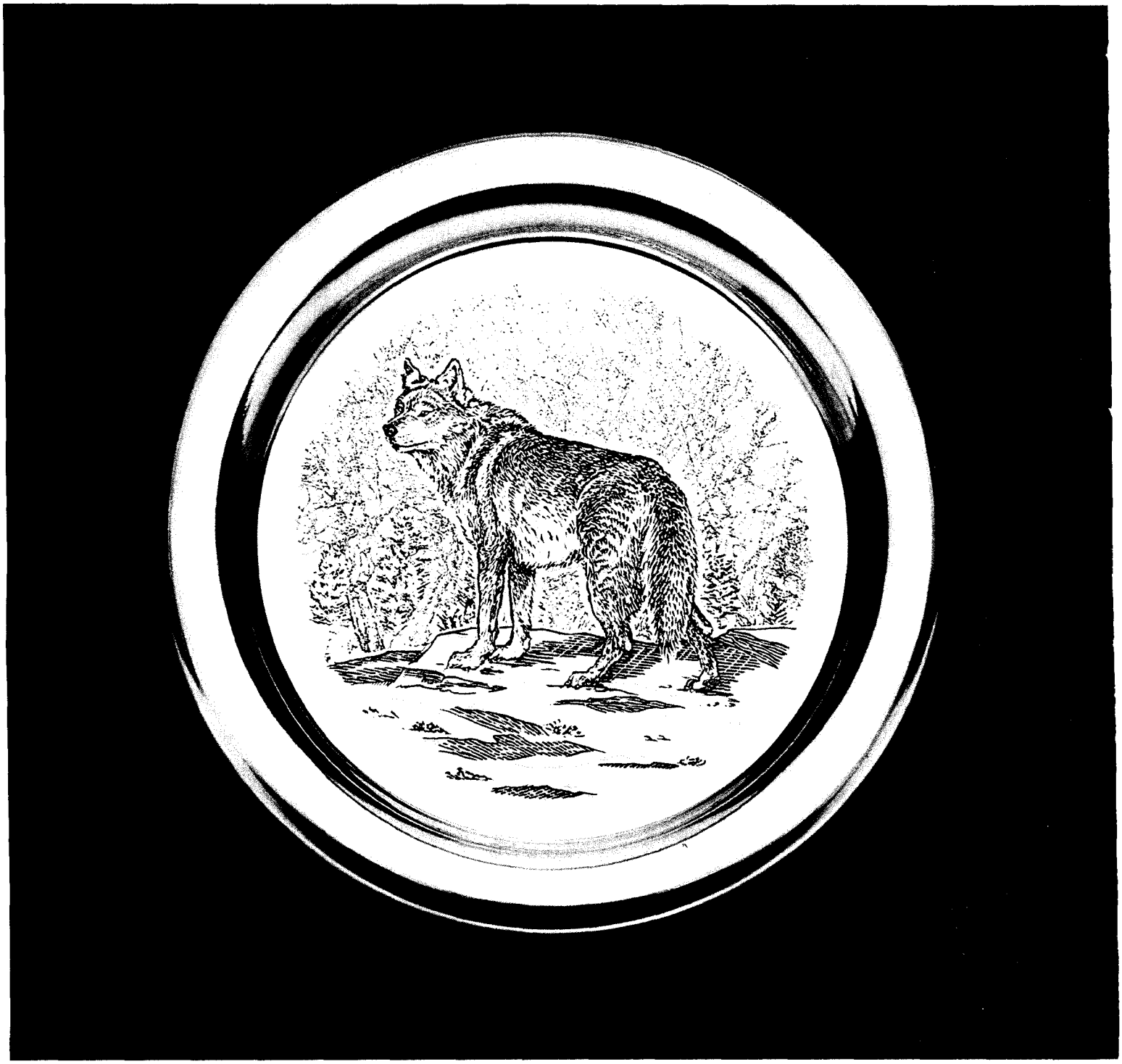

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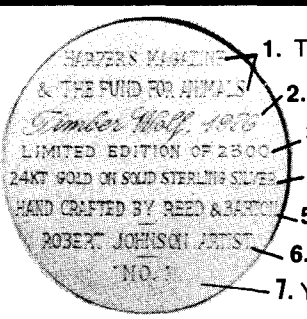

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was their major claim to diplomatic initiative, political boldness, and historic realism. There was the American President quoting Chairman Mao on TV: "'So many deeds cry out to be done, and always urgently. The world rolls on. Time passes. Seize the day. Seize the hour.' We will build a bridge across 16,000 miles and 22 years of hostility." By contrast the Ford-Kissinger team recently left Peking after the least important summit meeting in history. This summit, as then Acting Prime Minister Teng Hsiao-ping said at the time, set a new style in negotiations: not even a communiqué.

In Chairman Mao's Friendship stores, one of the leading export cigarette brands is called "Double Happiness." Four years ago the Nixon-Kissinger team exulted in the Double Happiness of forward movements on all fronts—with the Soviet Union and China alike, with international and domestic politics mutually self-sustaining. On all sides the contradictions of the double détente seemed to be working positively in application and applause. Those in charge of the policies and of the politics were doubly happy. Four years later it all threatens to turn into double unhappiness. The two détentes are in collision, and their contradictions are working negatively, both abroad and at home. Major opportunities have been missed and momentum has subsided.

After the historic opening to Peking four years ago, certain expectations were plausibly set in motion. Indeed a certain timetable followed logically from the formulations of the Shanghai Communiqué issued then by President Nixon and Premier Chou En-lai. The pace of the normalization process would have to move steadily ahead to formal fruition in diplomatic relations if, as intended, the momentum was to serve either bilateral US-China relations or the triangular relationship with the Soviets.

Two major variables would determine the new Sino-American equation: détente and Taiwan. American policy on one or the other would have to be radically modified for the relationship with China to deepen. As the architect of the new China policy, Kissinger must have seen this clearly. After all, the Chinese gambit was the centerpiece of his strategy. For him the road to Moscow lay through Peking. Consequently it was also obvious which policy modification offered promise and which one did not. Since we could not, should not, and would not sacrifice détente with Moscow for the sake of Peking, Taiwan was the issue where convincing change would have to occur to allow the consolidation of Kissinger's policy.

Events soon tended to reaffirm the timetable. By spring, 1974, Vietnam was behind us, and there was no longer any military rationale, however vague, still linking Taiwan to American needs in Indochina. By late summer, 1974, there was a new American President who would want to make his own mark in foreign policy. By late 1974 after Vladivostok, President Ford was publicly committed to visiting China himself during 1975. Entering 1975 it was obvious that formal diplomatic relations with Peking should be completed and announced during the President's visit if that visit was to avoid becoming a summit in search of a rationale. Kissinger's and Mr. Ford's failure to move on this historic timetable is even more astonishing considering two unasked-for domestic political advantages: 1) Mr. Ford's personal support for China normalization, and 2) Ronald Reagan's view—shared with the Chinese—on detente.

Recently I have been reading House Document No. 92-337 (1972), 92nd Congress, 2nd Session. It is entitled: "Impressions of the New China." My copy is marked "Compliments of Congressman Gerald R. Ford." This is the Joint Report to the US House of Representatives by former Majority Leader Hale Boggs and Minority Leader Ford on their Mission to the People's Republic of China, June 23 to July 7, 1972, four months after the Nixon visit and the Shanghai Communiqué. Signed and transmitted over both signatures, the Letter of Transmittal to the Speaker of the House says:

> *Dear Mr. Speaker: Transmitted herewith is a report of our recent journey to the People's Republic of China. Nearly one quarter of all mankind is Chinese. Together, our populations total more than 1 billion individuals. Yet, over nearly 23 years, we risked potentially dangerous misunderstandings as our nations became ever more isolated one from the other . . . We hope . . . in particular, that our journey will contribute in a small way to a normalization of US relations with China."*

Mr. Ford's report on his two weeks in China in 1972 makes striking re-reading today. Those of us who have recently been there would have no trouble in subscribing to his findings. Like most American visitors, Mr. Ford found the Chinese people "adequately fed, clothed and housed and therefore relatively content"; he was impressed by the "pervasive discipline and dedication"; he saw "a land well on the move toward development—a remarkable achievement"; he found "clean and bustling" cities; and he heard "unalterable themes of overcoming obstacles, exercising vigilance, and increasing production." Nor would more recent American visitors contest Mr. Ford's own conclusion of four years ago. "At present the world has little to fear from China. On the other hand, from China's point of view, the world must be something of a threatening place . . . Time does not stand still . . . The reality of China's colossal potential is perhaps the most vivid of our journey. [It] gave us much to ponder."

Under the circumstances, it is the Taiwan issue, repeatedly highlighted by Mr. Ford in his 1972 report, that gives us much to ponder in the wake of his administration's surprising inaction on precisely that

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question. Point by point, unambiguously and with precision, the minority leader and future President stated the case back in 1972 for moving quickly to complete the recognition process. In his report Mr. Ford noted that "our continuing diplomatic relations with the Republic of China are for the People's Republic of China a particular barrier to normalized relations." Wherever he turned, Ford ran into the recognition issue. On exchanges, Mr. Ford noted: "Our hosts cited the Taiwan question on a number of occasions as an obstacle, even to extensive people-to-people contact with us, and it is clear that the nature of our current relationship to Taiwan remains an obstacle." On trade, Mr. Ford found that "Among serious obstacles to increased trade is the absence of normal state relations . . . Diplomatic ties with China may be a condition precedent to any dramatic increase in the range and volume of goods traded. The Chinese seemed to be telling us that before too long, if trade relations are to improve, progress will have to be made in resolving . . . the status of our relationship with Taiwan." On resident news bureaus, Mr. Ford found: "The Taiwan question appears to be an obstacle to the establishment of news agencies in our respective countries." On students, Mr. Ford found: "In the academic area too, the Chinese seem reluctant to send students to American universities. This reluctance is related to the Taiwan question." On human rights, Mr. Ford found that "the Chinese multitudes seem oblivious that they lack the political liberty, social mobility, and individual orientation that we cherish in the United States." On Moscow, Mr. Ford found "The strains in Sino-Soviet relations suggest one of many possible reasons for current Chinese willingness to seek improved relations with the United States . . . Our recommendation in view of heightened Sino-Soviet tension is simply that the United States should, in its self-interest, carry forward the policy of improved relations with China." Finally, Mr. Ford concluded four years ago: "As we have mentioned, the issue of Taiwan remains a major obstacle to the improvement of our relations with China in view of our diplomatic relations and mutual defense treaty with Taiwan . . . We believe the Chief Executive should have substantial latitude to bring the problem to a solution. We trust the President will take into account the realities of the situation. In saying this we are not advocating 'abandonment' of the Chinese on Taiwan. We simply recognize the inaccurate impression that there is not one China, but two."

Ever since he became President, Mr. Ford has looked for some foreign policy move on which to place his own imprimatur. Compared with the rest of his generally blank slate on foreign policy, he was on record on China, personally and recently. "What you do as President is make decisions," Kissinger once said. "It's total nonsense to say that a man grows into the job. A President gains only two things after he gets into office: experience with bureaucracy and knowledge of people. All the rest you must bring with you." Mr. Ford brought to the presidency very few foreign policy convictions. But China was an exception. Why has Kissinger been unable to utilize the great good luck of the President's personal support on normalization with China?

At least for the past two years, the completed recognition of Peking has presented itself as the most achievable and least intractable among the big issues Kissinger has faced—easier than Panama, much easier than Angola, far easier than the Middle East, infinitely easier than overall détente with the Russians, yet indispensable to and notably supportive of the latter, at least as judged by Kissinger's own reputed claims. Indeed at various times he has been extravagant enough to describe Chinese-American ties as the decisive element affecting Soviet behavior positively—whether on Berlin, the Middle East or whatever.

Since 1972 the artificiality and growing conspicuousness of the US failure to recognize Peking has been painfully obvious. Except for the US and South Korea, no governments that matter in East Asia still recognize Taiwan. Nobody in NATO, CENTO or SEATO. Nobody in the Middle East except Jordan and Saudi Arabia. By contrast almost every NATO capital has recognized Peking over the years: Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, and Britain in the early 1950s; France in the mid-1960s; and Italy, Canada, Turkey, Belgium, Iceland, Germany, Greece and Luxembourg in the early 1970s. The only other NATO member, Portugal, recently tried to give Macao back to China, only to be told that the present situation was satisfactory. Today the People's Republic even has an ambassador in Brussels accredited to the European Economic Community, the only Communist country besides Yugoslavia that has one. In Asia, all of China's near neighbors, except for South Korea and Singapore, recognize her: the Soviet Union, North Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Thailand, North and South Vietnam, Malaysia, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Afghanistan and Iran.

Our own dilemma leaps from the language of the Shanghai Communiqué released by Nixon and Chou En-lai in February, 1972. The Chinese stated that Taiwan was the crucial question obstructing the normalization of relations with the US and ruled out every equivocal formula short of acceptance of Taiwan as a province of China. The US side declared:

> *The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. With this prospect in mind, it affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all US forces and military installations from Taiwan. In the meantime, it will*

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progressively reduce its forces and military installations on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes.

Since then, tension in the area has diminished. The Vietnam war is over. We have reduced US forces to something under 3000 now on Taiwan. But in a highly uneven performance, to say the least, we have also counter-implemented the Shanghai Communiqué by building up, rather than reducing, our political investment in Taiwan. We have opened five new Taiwanese consulates on American soil since 1972. We seemed to go out of our way to appoint a distinguished career ambassador to Taipei. "Our two countries," Kissinger announced in Peking last October, "are too self-reliant to need reassurance and too experienced to confuse words with reality, or tactics with strategy." Yet such confusion was never more strikingly displayed than in our policy of normalizing relations with Peking.

How does it happen that, in the four years since the Shanghai Communiqué, a priority as high as this one has been subject to such uneven direction by its chief policy manager? Kissinger has said lamely that the opening of the new Taiwan consulates was "a bureaucratic snafu" that he apparently didn't really know all that much about. He has suggested that something like that also lay behind the designation of the high level ambassador. But we have also increased military credit sales in the intervening years to Taiwan. We have authorized co-production of military aircraft there.

This was all done with full awareness that the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan would somehow have to be renounced as inoperative or to be allowed to wither away before or at the time of formal recognition, perhaps to be replaced by a broader unilateral reassertion of the US stake in peaceful processes and nonuse of force in the area. For there is no way to negotiate a no-force commitment from Peking in an uncompleted civil war, just as there is no way for us to maintain a military alliance with an entity that the government we recognize thinks of as a rebel regime on its territory. Our 1954 treaty with Taiwan purports to commit the United States to "resist armed attack and Communist subversive activities directed against [Taiwan's] territorial integrity and political stability." How long can this "commitment" remain credible? Chou En-lai officially denounced the treaty 22 years ago as "a grave warlike provocation against the People's Republic" as "seizing Chinese territory," "infringing upon China's sovereignty," and "naked aggression," contrary to prior international agreements signed by the United States. Today, against all the evidence of the intervening years, many on Taiwan must doubt the American public's willingness actually to join militarily in a renewal of the Chinese Civil War three decades after it was lost—even in the unlikely event that open hostilities might resume.

On the contrary, the inevitability of formal US recognition of Peking and an appropriate disposal of the defense treaty has been taken for granted by almost everybody since the Shanghai Communique. Delegations of congressional visitors following Mr. Ford are well aware of the problem and have become adept at inviting presidential leadership on the issue.

There is reason to believe that the Taiwan authorities themselves have been braced for the inevitable. After all they have become accustomed to surviving events more sudden and shocking then the long-expected, formal completion of the American rapprochement with Peking. They endured the shocks of Kissinger's initial secret trip of 1971, of seeing Mao and Nixon together in Peking in 1972, of the one-China text of the Shanghai Communiqué itself, of the opening of the US Liaison Office in Peking, of the congressional repeal of the Formosa Resolution, of the fall of Vietnam, of the death of Chiang Kai-shek. And still Taiwan is thriving.

Ever since Japan's formal recognition of China in 1972, it has been clear that the "Japanese formula" was acceptable to Peking. Indeed the Chinese have been explicit in saying as much to us. The Japanese experience in practice also helps to discount the old emotional language of "abandoning" or "sacrificing" our friends on Taiwan. Under the Japanese formula, only official relations with Taiwan need cease. Commercial, cultural, trading relationships there can continue and grow.

Realistically we also know that the limited amphibious military capabilities of the People's Republic are such that there is no way in which Taiwan against its will can be taken over by China for many years to come—years in which other forms of accommodation can occur. So it is neither a moral nor a security question of "surrendering" Taiwan. Rather, it is a question of removing an anachronistic hangover from a debacle that has haunted our domestic politics and obstructed our foreign policy for a generation. We have recently had an opportunity, which Kissinger and Mr. Ford have muffed, to put the matter of recognition behind us and to do it under the auspices of a rare constellation of forces at a moment of optimum timing: when the triangular relationships among Washington-Peking-Moscow were front and center and before the triple succession struggles in those three capitals began; while Brezhnev, Mao and Ford were still in office; while Chou En-lai was still alive, before the surprises started, like the emergence of Acting Premier Hua Kuo-feng, and before the American relationship became a big factor internally again in Peking; when a Republican administration could put the finishing touches on the most farsighted and widely praised of the Nixon administration's foreign policies and while the move could be made under the protection of maximum domestic political permissiveness in the United States. Instead everyone is now explaining that this historic achievement proved impossible because of

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Mr. Ford's fixation on Ronald Reagan. But this too is a failure of political imagination of a high order.

Unfortunately Ronald Reagan never followed his friend Richard Nixon to Peking. Had he done so, he might have picked up the Peking telephone directory, which is said to carry among its emergency listings one that reads: "Dial 00 for policy." (Presumably to have reached George Bush you dialed 007.) If Mr. Reagan had dialed 00 he would have heard some compatible excerpts of Mao's thoughts recited over the phone—thoughts like the following, said to have been thought by Mao in 1926: "Who are our enemies? Who are our friends? This is a question of the first importance. The basic reason why all previous revolutionary struggles in China achieved so little was their failure to unite with real friends in order to attack real enemies." Who knows, it might have made Mr. Reagan a true believer—part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

For in his case the convergence concerning the Kremlin would have been complete. Peking is Reagan country when it comes to denouncing détente. There Reagan and the Chinese are kindred spirits. He said on his radio program recently: "We are blind to reality if we refuse to recognize that détente's usefulness to the Soviets is only as a cover for their traditional and basic strategy for aggression." The Hsinhua news agency would syndicate that Reagan message all over China to the remotest factory and commune. Reagan would surely be impressed; it might even cause him to stop and think.

Kissinger himself is addicted to saying that the greatest danger to Sino-American relations is a Chinese perception of the US as an incompetent and bumbling power too divided internally to carry out a rational foreign policy. So how can it be that the Secretary, for whom forward movement on the China gambit was always essential to the triangular relationship—the Kissinger whom Chou En-lai once described as "having a Chinese mind"—could fail to put these positive elements together constructively in paving the way for final recognition at the Mao-Ford summit?

How can it be that Ford and Kissinger have been so out of their respective depths on this one? How could they end up prematurely overreacting to Reagan, when the opposite scenario almost wrote itself: splintering the right, between the strategists and the Know-Nothings; bringing Reagan along on the policy or else isolating him from many of his defense-oriented supporters; demonstrating Ford's capacity for a coherent foreign policy move, one with his personal stamp upon it, with guaranteed support from Nixon, Jackson, Schlesinger, Mansfield, Scott, Julie and David, and with the enthusiasm or acquiescence of nearly everybody else once he took the lead. For Kissinger and Ford to have been unable in 1975 to put this issue behind us, with so many positive elements in the picture paving the way, will I think be recognized historically for what it is: a simple lack of imagination and competence. Since it was unnecessary, it is doubly poignant for the failure will impede not only the further unfolding of the bilateral relationship between Peking and Washington but also play its part in obstructing Kissinger's larger design for détente. Since we were clearly not going to give up on détente with the Soviets and indeed were hoping to move ahead on it, it was obvious that we should have moved—in advance—to resolve the Taiwan issue and consolidate the Peking connection. We could have had normalization without illusions. Now we have illusions without normalization.

In failing to complete the China recognition policy, Mr. Ford once more, as in his Halloween fiasco eliminating Defense Secretary Schlesinger for insubstantial reasons, has invited more public opposition than he had to. His political ineptitude will encourage recidivist actions that could and should have been preempted by competent presidential leadership. Rear guard resolutions will now wend their way through congressional lobbies that need never have formed.

Kissinger's failure to seize his historic opportunity to resolve the Taiwan question now bequeaths to American politics a legacy of more of the same—the perpetuation of an anachronistic argument that has vexed us for a quarter century. This is a self-inflicted wound, cutting off the only significant blood supply for continuing momentum on US-China relations and thereby handicapping the further testing of those unfolding possibilities. Above all else, in Kissingerian terms it reduces effective pressure on Moscow at the time he needs it most, and thereby impedes his overall effort toward détente. In saying so, I write as one fundamentally sympathetic with, and supportive of, his effort to take the process of détente as far as it can reasonably, productively go.

he result, in my judgment, is a fundamental strategic and tactical error—an historic failure of nerve. The administration was unable to summon the courage of its own convictions. As used to be said of the liberals, on this issue Ford and Kissinger look like leaders who can't take their own side in an argument. Nothing remained but the formalities, yet they found it impossible to complete the remaining one-eighth of the process already taken seven-eighths of the way by Kissinger and Nixon four years ago.

It is too bad. They could have removed the last formal impediment to whatever might seriously be possible in our future relations with China. As it is, Sino-American relations have come on more like George Bernard Shaw's description of Lady Halle's performance as pianist in the Beethoven Septet: "She took the first movement at about two-thirds of the lowest speed needed to sustain life; the others followed her from note to note and thought of other things."

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on theater

Report from Abroad

I've just spent two weeks in two countries. Herewith some comments.

Athens

Jules Dassin, the film director (*He Who Must Die, Never on Sunday*), is American but lives in Greece. He recently directed a production of the Brecht-Weill *Threepenny Opera* for an Athens theater, and I went to an early performance one day. (Most Athens theaters give two performances a day, usually at 6 and 8:30 pm.) The theater itself is a converted film house in a middle-class residential neighborhood and has prospered with serious plays for several seasons.

The Weill music was well played by a half dozen musicians on a balcony at one side of the stage. The settings, which folded in and out, made the most of an uncongenial space, not intended for actors. The performance moved with fluency and (it's possible to tell in another language) some wit. The actors were all at least competent although I get a whiff of old-time stock-company aroma: that is, each of them had a line of business he had developed. A striking exception was the Jenny, a sexy brunette named Eva Kotamanidou who, I would bet, has versatility and certainly has stage command. The role was first played in this production by Melina Mercouri who left for other work and was replaced by Kotamanidou. Greek friends told me I was lucky.

None of the cast could really sing, but all of them knew how to handle music in the theater. And surely that score contains some of the best theater songs ever written.

The audience seemed to be made up of neighborhood folks, family groups with shopping bags who had stopped in on the way home. They liked the show, laughed at its sallies, and applauded the songs—especially Kotamanidou's. Then they picked up their shopping bags and went home. So much for revolution via the theater.

London

The city was gripped by a cold wind so constant and bitter that even Londoners complained. Hotels and restaurants were moderately heated, their toilets not at all. (Ouch.) Evidently theaters don't use much heat backstage because when the curtain rose, an arctic gust billowed out over the audience, many of whom sat in overcoats anyway.

The National Theater is presenting Albert Finney as Hamlet. Or, to put it more precisely, Hamlet as Albert Finney. I thought of Max Beerbohm's comment about Duse: she "never stoops to impersonation." This is not generally true of Finney, as witness his Luther and his Hercule Poirot, but it was certainly true here. He knew the words; he moved through the motions; he was appropriately wrought or wry or whatever, though never affectively so. But there was never any sense of a being named Hamlet, just our Albert speaking these lines instead of others.

I'm not arguing for a "concept," imposed and intervening. In fact the one bare purpose of the production seemed to be to show that *Hamlet* can be done today without any modish concept. But that's a negative action. Nothing was created here. If there is no vision in a *Hamlet* production of a young man who has been moved into dimensions of worldly complication and spiritual vastness that he foresaw, feared and cannot now escape (I'm putting it minimally), if there is no attempt to represent the unrepresentable, then there is no central poetry and therefore no play. Finney simply moved along from point to point like a counter on a game board. He is an actor, a real actor, so he is always watchable, unlike that frenetic whippersnapper Sam Waterston, whose recent Hamlet was the latest insult that Joseph Papp offered to Shakespeare and the New York audience. (I endured half.) But what a thing to have to say about Finney—that he was better than Waterston.

No one in the London cast was much better than Finney except Dennis Quilley who had some good moments as Claudius. But even Quilley, when he was doubling as the Ghost, exaggerated vocally like a 19th-century ham. Angela Lansbury, the Queen, is often good in contemporary work but her voice and delivery made her ludicrous here from the first word. Susan Fleetwood, the Ophelia, jarred my faith in the English theater's ability to come up with good young actresses: she was emotionally false and technically clumsy. Roland Culver, for years an attractive light comedian, was torpid as Polonius: Hamlet makes bawdy remarks to his daughter right in front of him, and Culver behaves as if the prince were commenting on the weather. Simon Ward (of *Young Winston*) couldn't control Laertes: he kept running after the part as after a horse that had thrown him.

The setting—a bare raked stage—was designed by John Bury who has designed for Pinter and still seems in Pinterland. The lighting by David Hersey was signally unhelpful. It had no color: every lamp I could see was white. Perhaps this was intended by the director, Peter Hall, to support his music-hall staging of certain scenes. For instance, in the first court scene, King and Queen and courtiers lined up across the stage and addressed us. But this consciously theatrical gimmick, pointless though it was, couldn't be used consistently of course, so it became even more pointless, as did the white lighting. Hall, as well as Finney—or perhaps Hall and therefore Finney—gave us a *Hamlet* barren of feeling, depth and design.

Incidentally the play is billed as uncut—it runs almost four hours—yet Finney omitted the high point of "O vengeance!" from the "rogue and peasant slave" soliloquy.

I saw several other London productions, including an abominable *Sea Gull* directed by Lindsay Anderson. By far

Films Worth Seeing

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest. Ken Kesey's dubious mental-hospital allegory, but Jack Nicholson gives one of the memorable performances in US film history.

Lina Wertmüller. Three films by this Italian writer-director are now on view: *All Screwed Up* (1973), modern Milan macerates young people; *Swept Away* (1974), rich yachtswoman and poor sailor on desert island; *Seven Beauties* (1975), a Neapolitan in WW II. All are imperfect, but all contain marvels—especially the last—and all confirm the eruption of a unique and stunning talent.

SK

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the best of the lot was an "off Broadway" production, *Artaud at Rodez*, written and directed by Charles Marowitz. He is an American who works in London as playwright, director, producer and critic. I have admired some of his criticism; this is the first Marowitz play I have seen, presented in a small basement theater, which he started, called the Open Space. The play was a touch heavy-handed but was generally engrossing.

Antonin Artaud (1896-1948) was a crazy genius, now celebrated as the author of *The Theater and Its Double*, the book in which the principles of the Theater of Cruelty were enunciated, and of *The Cenci* and *The Fountain of Blood*, two extraordinary plays in which those principles were utilized. Artaud was a beautiful young man, a stage and film actor (visible in, for instance, Dreyer's *Joan*) who soon became subject to fits of insanity, behaved outrageously, and was sometimes confined. Marowitz's script centers on Artaud's three years (1943-46) at a mental hospital in Rodez under a Dr. Ferdière who prided himself on his sympathy with artists yet whose treatment of Artaud has been the subject of controversy.

The play has two main themes: the jealousy of the sane (Ferdière) for the visions of the insane (Artaud), something that Artaud knows and exults in; and, connected with this, the—shall we say—traditional role of the madman in art, particularly French art. (Van Gogh and Rimbaud are only two among other examples.) Marowitz's style was subjective: that is, both the script and the performance were not descriptive of the material as much as they tried to make us see everything through Artaud's eyes. (Artaud's own recorded voice was heard between scenes, reading his poems in wild incantation.) Clive Merrison played Artaud with very daring and quite successful grotesqueness, to externalize the turmoil within.

Some of the satire of orthodoxy was too predictable to be biting, but on the whole the production was on fire with imagination and purpose—something I can't say about anything else I saw in London on this chilly visit.

Concert and Opera Chronicle

The unending flow of incandescent vocal and orchestral invention in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* makes it one of the supreme wonders achieved by human powers. It has had great performances at the Metropolitan—the ones in 1943 and 1944 with, above all, Steber's Countess, and in addition Sayao's Susanna, Novotna's Cherubino, Pinsa's Figaro, Brownlee's Count—performances whose only imperfections were Bruno Walter's slowing down of the second subject of the overture and Cherubino's first-act aria ("When Walter comes to something beautiful," Toscanini commented once, "he melts"). And one listened undistracted by the scenery that Jonel Jorgolesco had been content to make unobtrusively serviceable, or by the stage direction of Herbert Graf, except for one detail in the last act—Susanna's extravagant posturings in the Countess' cloak and hat.

All this as an introduction to the fact that the Metropolitan's new production this year offered not a great musical performance but a good one, with Judith Blegen's beautifully and expressively sung and delightfully acted Susanna standing out above the competent and effective Countess of Evelyn Lear, Cherubino of Frederica von Stade, Figaro of Justinio Diaz and Count of Wolfgang Brendel, and with the high-spirited orchestral context provided by Steuart Bedford. But, as usually happens in the opera house nowadays, one was at times distracted from this good musical performance by the newly thought-up details of the scenic designer Robert O'Hearn and stage director Günther Rennert—what Victor Gollancz, in his book on opera production, *The Ring at Bayreuth*, calls the "visualities" that do not, as they should, "help in realizing the musical-dramatic intention of the work" but, as they should not, "focus . . . attention on [themselves]"—*i.e.* on their mere novelty, and often their disservice to the work.

Thus Mozart places the first act of *Figaro* in a partly furnished room that is to be Figaro's and Susanna's bedroom, in which, as the curtain rises, Figaro is measuring the floor for the placing of the bed while Susanna, seated before a mirror, is trying on a new hat. But at the Metropolitan the rising curtain revealed a room with the singular feature of two enormous windows in the rear wall through which one saw a flight of stairs rising alongside of them; and one was distracted by the thought that it was impossible to believe a bedroom, or indeed any room, would have such windows alongside a flight of stairs, and by the question what their dramatic purpose could be. The rising curtain also revealed Figaro alone on the stage, carrying in the frame of a bed and busying himself with its headboard as he began to sing "*Cinque . . . dieci . . . venti*"; which raised the distracting objection that it made no sense to sing these measurements of the floor when he was fussing with the headboard of the bed. And the purpose of the windows and stairs was revealed when one saw Susanna hurry down the stairs, new hat in hand, and enter through the door in the rear wall; which raised the further distracting objections that if, as seemed likely, she was coming from the Countess she should have entered through the door on the left that led to the Countess' quarters, and that providing this improbable entrance for Susanna—and, later, Cherubino's entrance through one of the windows—was not a purpose that justified the outlandish windows and flight of stairs.

There was more of this sort of thing, of which I mention only the room decorated for the wedding that Mozart specifies for Act Three. In place of the usual rear wall there were imposingly tall wooden doors flanked by tall windows through which one saw the green outdoors; and these caused one to reflect that if the doors were, as they seemed, the palace's entrance doors, they should open into an entrance hall, not directly into one of its principal rooms; and that the doors of a room leading directly to the outdoors would be not wood but glass. Moreover it was through the wooden entrance doors that Susanna slipped in holding the purse with the money to pay Figaro's debt to Marcellina; which caused one to reflect that she should be coming not from outdoors but from somewhere inside the palace.

It was the New York City Opera, not the Metropolitan, that started the vandalism which designer-director teams have been inflicting on operas the past 30 years, and of which the

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The Free Press
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company's new production of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* this year was the latest example of its "opera as modern, exciting theater." Wagner has the first act begin with Walther alone on the stage, signaling to Eva in the off-stage nave of Saint Catherine's Church, in which the unseen congregation is singing the final chorale of the service; and his approaching her when the congregation files out of the nave. But at the New York State Theater the designer Carl Toms chose to place the first act *inside* the nave, with Walther, at one side of it, visible to the singing congregation as he signals to Eva; which raised in one's mind the distracting question what dramatic purpose was intended as against the awkwardness and incredibility of what was achieved. And the continuing action brought further distracting awkwardness: as Wagner has it, Magdalene's having to go back into the nave repeatedly for the articles left behind by Eva and herself provides time for Walther's impassioned phrases to Eva; but with the three characters all inside the nave one saw the awkwardness that resulted from Magdalene's needing little time for the few steps to where she and Eva had sat. In addition there was the effect of John Cox's innovations in stage direction, the worst of which was to have Beckmesser, in his hallucinatory whirling about when alone in Sachs' workshop, pick up a hammer or mallet and bang it against everything in sight; which distracted one with the question how this noisy clatter could fail to bring Sachs or David down to investigate.

Nor, unlike the Metropolitan's *Figaro*, did this *Meistersinger* offer a good musical performance of the work that has some of Wagner's most engaging and at times affecting writing. The New York City Opera's director, Julius Rudel, claims for it a personnel that "moves from Mozart to Weisgall" with unfailing authenticity in every style; but with the exception of John Alexander's excellent singing as Walther the performance I heard demonstrated the company's lack of the singers, orchestra and conductor the work required. Eva was sung by Eleanor Bergquist with a voice suited for Musetta in *La Bohème*; the Sachs was Norman Bailey, whose voice, agreeable-sounding in the first and last acts, was rough and harsh in the lyrical writing of the second; and with these inadequacies in two of the major roles one heard the lack of amplitude and richness in the sound of the orchestral context—a result not only of the orchestra's deficiencies in size and quality, but of the theater's acoustical deficiencies, and to some extent of Rudel's limitations as a conductor. And this is to say nothing of the damaging and distracting effect of the substitution of English for the work's German.

Seiji Ozawa obtained beautiful playing from the Boston Symphony, in New York's Carnegie Hall, in the performance of Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet* with the New England Conservatory Chorus and the mezzo-soprano Julia Hamari, tenor Jean Dupouy and bass Jose van Dam. And though Ozawa's pacing of the work was unusually fast he shaped it, in the faster tempos, with plasticity that achieved affecting expressiveness. Berlioz's music is what I have heard him conduct with the effectiveness his performances of Beethoven haven't had—the most recent example being Beethoven's Ninth, whose flowing variations in the slow movement require the expressive inflection that Ozawa didn't introduce; whose statements of the string basses at the beginning of the finale must have the character and expressive effect of vocal recitative that they didn't have in the strict tempo in which he conducted them; and whose several sections of the finale must be given the coherence and cumulative impact that he didn't achieve. And I was led to the thought that the chief conductor of the Boston Symphony should be someone able to deal with the major classical repertory.

Having been impressed by the recently formed Cleveland Quartet's superb recorded performances of Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* Quartet and his less familiar Octet, whose many pages of wonderful writing make it a work that should be played more frequently than it is, I went to hear the opening concert of the group's Beethoven cycle in New York's Alice Tully Hall. The playing exhibited the instrumental virtuosity, the tonal beauty, the musical sensitivity, the perfection of ensemble of a quartet of the first rank; but at times—in the opening movement of Op. 18 No. 6, the fugal finale of Op. 59 No. 3, the concluding *allegro* section of the Great Fugue Op. 133—the tempo was too fast for the music to make its effect or even, in the finale of Op. 59 No. 3, for its detail to be heard and grasped. Also, I consider it a mistake to conclude Op. 130 with the Great Fugue, in which I hear no relation to the first five movements of Op. 130 in style, substance and expressive content, instead of with the finale that Beethoven substituted for it, which goes well with those five movements.

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Reed Whittemore on Television

And Some (Folks) Do Not

"Lots of folks need help now and then," said a man selling Ex-Lax to me on John Chancellor's news program recently, and thereupon my heart was driven wild.

But my heart is an old heart and has been driven wild for 40 years by advertising crud. As a good Jesuit priest said to me many long years ago, "Don't be driven wild, chum, by the little cheats of advertising. We have bigger cheats than those to reckon with in this world, and anyway advertising cheating is known cheating, agreed-upon cheating. Even the kids know about it and discount it." Was not the good priest right?

I'll pass that question for a moment but acknowledge that 40 years of my heart's wildness has accomplished nothing. After 40 years the admen are still hard at their dishonesties, they are still perfectly incapable of admitting—perhaps even to themselves—that the dishonesties *are* dishonesties, and the government regulatory machinery is still perfectly incapable of approaching the hard core of the dishonesties. The hard core? The hard core is not factual dishonesty but the sort of thing a class in literary criticism might while away an idle hour at, that is, the verbal chicanery contained in Ex-Lax's use of such words as "folks" and "help" in its message. (Any student who finds nine ways in which those words are misleading in context may take a long weekend.) After 40 years there is still so much left of that dishonest hard core that to be practical I can only agree with the good priest and say to myself, "Chum, be wild no more."

Yet I remember another adviser out of the deep past, one who was not as complacent as the good priest. I remember reading him at college on the lovely subject of the decline of culture and civilization. He was a fine loftiness from across the sea, F.R. Leavis. He sprinkled his works liberally with quotations from other high-minded gents, men like Sir Egerton Brydges (who had said, "Bad and mean writings . . . will secure tenfold the number of readers of good and high productions") and Ezra Pound (who had said, "A tawdry cheapness shall outlast our days"). He also inserted plenty of high-minded wildness of his own on the subject of what he called "the deliberate exploitation of cheap responses." He would have found at least three-score ways in which "folks" and "help" are misleading.

This wildness of Leavis' about mean writings occurred chiefly in the '30s. In those years he kept himself busy (and wild) by reading authorities on advertising. The authorities were full of wonder then at the science of advertising. They kept telling him that little men in white coats were indulging in a new strangeness called market research. He was mightily impressed with that notion, market research, and also with the "unprecedented use of applied psychology" to such problems as selling Ex-Lax. He feared that the appliers would soon take over, that the age of total conditioning was at hand; and so he issued a number of polemics, his way of saving the world. Mostly he had his guns trained on radio but he was playing prophet too, dreaming of something beyond radio—"the near future holds rapid developments in store"—and he was as sour on that future as Oswald Spengler himself. But characteristically he did not worry about the lot of the common man in that future. No, he saw the market researchers, the language

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destroyers, the evil debasers of the mind as moving in on the *good* folks too—and by the good folks he meant the leaders of the "minority culture." In one of his prominent essays of the period called "Mass Civilization and Minority Culture" he made it clear that the minority's fate was what chiefly disturbed him. Who would turn out the good novels or even the good book reviews that he delighted in if all classes and parties were corrupted by the advertiser corrupters? In a remarkable demonstration of mental agility he moved, in his essay, from the low corrupters to one high and solitary literary figure who had been, he was convinced, corrupted *by* the low. His target was poor Arnold Bennett.

Bennett had been, Leavis rushed to acknowledge, a bit of a fool from the beginning of his literary career, but at least at the beginning he had not been a mercenary Pavlovian. He had developed his crass marketing know-how slowly, moving from an early and sometimes even right-minded impudence (Leavis was always cautious with his compliments) slowly to a mature awareness of what a shrewdly dishonorable entrepreneur could *do* to literature. And what did Bennett learn? He learned to use the machinery of advertising and he put his knowledge to use in promoting whatever books he chose. He grew better and better at promotion until he became at last an arbiter of the national taste. He became so successful in his deviltry that "to compute how many bad books a year, on the average, Mr. Bennett has turned into literature would hardly be worth the labour." So much for Arnold Bennett.

The attack on Bennett was perhaps brought on by some private Leavis grudge but it was not the most curious feature of his essay. What was stranger yet—or seems stranger now, in America, after 40 years of deadly entrepreneuring in both books and Ex-Lax—was that Leavis assumed what my good priest denied, assumed that the cheating in the advertising world *did* slop over into the other worlds. Leavis assumed that neither kids nor Arnold Bennetts were able to discount and dismiss the cheating but were instead molded by it, made into cheats by it themselves. That was his Arnold Bennett moral.

I say that the assumption seems strange now but I do not mean that there are no Bennetts now. There are simply no Leavises now, nobody blaming Ex-Lax for our Bennetts, nobody proclaiming that our intellectual minority culture is victimized by the exploiters of the cheap response just as the mass culture is. In general our intellectuals take instead the good priest's position, and if some of them go so far as to acknowledge that they are themselves students of responses and know a thing or two about exploitation they still insist or assume that their actions are lofty, noble, unconnected with Ex-Lax.

Perhaps this separation is automatic, itself a form of conditioning. We have been living with Ex-Lax so long that we now think we know its corrupt soul intimately and can therefore keep our distance. Especially if we are intellectuals our 40-year training has led us to take stances toward it of annoyance or superior sufferance. We just know that Ex-Lax has nothing to do with us. We just know that our minds—and the words that proceed from our minds—are above Ex-Lax. We know what we know so surely that lots of us go out of our way to avoid using simple words like "folks" and "help," preferring to be scientific and objective and pure, preferring to create words that are very long and end in "ized."

In fact it is the intellectual's *need* for separateness that argues most strongly Ex-Lax's continuing sway. Take the recent doings for instance (reported by John Leonard in *The New York Times*) of a young literary entrepreneur, Michael Newman. Newman is working in the shadow of TV's mass-culture entrepreneurs but trying to live purely there. He is therefore assaulting TV with a program that has a jargon of its own and is intended, one supposes, to be radically innovative. From the description in the paper the show sounds interesting and maybe comic, but it also sounds like a most defensive undertaking. Newman aspires, reports Leonard, "to a 'quantum poetic,' to an 'interface' between poetry and music-journalism-science-television." That is some interface, just as the word 'interface' is some word; and between the word and the idea Newman should be able to keep *lots of folks* away, especially since the show is also going to have characters walking around in T-shirts labelled Entropy, Word, Atom, God, Succession, Chance, Heuristic, Number, Displacement, Spacetime, Anodyne, Amino, Chimaera, Bacilli and Ping-pong.

Newman's defensiveness is to be seen also in his current moonlighting efforts. He needs money; so while he goes about New York town trying to sell his radical TV show he writes non-radical pulp stories, stealing the plots from TV. He is, Leonard reports, pleased and unrepentant that he can shuttle between his serious enterprise and moneymaking. He has found out how to keep charge of his own life and words.

Leonard agrees that Newman *should* be unrepentant, and I agree too. Writing pulps is an old and honorable industry, and money is an old and honorable need. Yet does not his shuttling back and forth between the serious work and the pulp work show a fear of the latter, a fear that, if he doesn't shuttle, *it* will take over and convert him to an Arnold Bennett? I would guess so. I would guess that he is afraid it might, and so lives a deliberately double verbal life.

If Newman's motives are these he is, I would say, not an oddity at all but a good representative of most of us in the minority culture—except that he is acting out his doubleness consciously and methodically. If so, what he is doing may save him from the Arnold Bennett trap but certainly points to the *presence* of the trap. And therefore points to the wrongness of the good priest. The rightness of Leavis.

Yes, after every other commercial these days I keep thinking that we should stop practicing an impossible aloofness and be wild again at the Ex-Lax tribe.

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Books Considered

Colonial New York by Michael Kammen

(Scribner's; $15)

Many regional histories will appear before, during and after the Bicentennial. Let us hope they approach *Colonial New York* in overall excellence. First of all, the subject itself is intriguing. New York—as a colony, and later as a state—is (along with California) the most representative of our American commonwealths; and it is this paradigmatic aspect—this part reflecting the whole, in terms of geography, population, founding institutions and aspirations—that Professor Kammen of Cornell takes as his general, unifying theme. Without pushing his case too far, strictly by the skill of his narrative, he makes the experience of colonial New York anticipate the experience of the American nation.

As would prove the case in later America, no one elite—military, mercantile, legal, or theological—so dominated New York's founding time as to fix, once and for all, the perameters of its culture. Elite collapsed upon elite in a symptomatic drama of conflict and replacement. The Dutch hegemony was colorful but brief; and even while it obtained, it was harassed and interpenetrated by the English to the immediate north, the French in the upstate border county, Swedes and other Scandinavians to the south, and internally by varieties of Huguenots, Sephardics, Quakers and others, all of whom, resisting being made over into Dutch (or later, into English), blithely went their own way: modifying laws and practices, enlarging the possibilities of a composite culture, until by the mid-18th century the whole bubbled away in sundry flavors like good stew in a Dutch oven.

In New England, the pulpit dominated intellectual life, forging a communal consciousness around a cluster of fiery tenents of negation and assent. The Dutch Church, as theologically Calvinist as its sister church to the north, never managed to seize comparable control. Its divines were lackluster in the pulpit and eclectic in polity. Dutch Reformed Services were conducted in English, and Anglican services were given in Dutch. Certain pastors switch-hitted between Reformed or Anglican, depending upon shifting ascendancies in local politics.

Dutch law, based upon Roman jurisprudence, blended with common law precedents, compelling Dutch law during the Dutch period to lose some of its abstract severity, and giving English law during the English period a little more rigor and systemization. New York was conquered by the English, reconquered by the Dutch, then ceded to the British crown; yet these political changes merely skimmed the surface of a process of amalgamation already underway.

Although it allowed slavery, New York was not the South; its experience with slavery, because it was in a Middle Atlantic context, lacked deliberate, institutionalized exploitation. New York prided itself on its benevolence and liberalism. And yet a fear of slave revolts seethed beneath the placid surface, erupting into a half a dozen or so outbursts of repression and hysteria, when innocent blacks were sent to the scaffold. As would later prove the more enduring case in America, after slavery was abolished, the black-white relationship had been corrupted at the core. Benevolence offered no cure.

The one thing colonial New Yorkers seemed to have in common was money; and in its remorseless materialism—as well as in its pluralism and racism—New York again suggested the national experience. Coin of the realm transcended and harmonized all differences. In a culture theologically unstable, shifting in elites, demographically pluralistic, unconcerned with art or *belle lettres*, what else could fill the void? Money energized. It pushed civilization into the great forests of the North. It threw up marvelous manor houses along the Hudson. It gave the island of Manhattan the beginnings of a metropolis which, even then, was assuming the burden of support for the colony's poor.

Kammen's narrative offers little consolation to lovers of intellectual history (for colonial New York seemed devoid of shaping ideas); but energy abounds in protagonists remorselessly on-the-make: Peter Stuyvesant, a truly able man in a Dutch landscape of administrative mediocrity; Robert Livingston, bourgeois in the process of becoming upper class; Cadwallader Colden, bringing scholarship to a colony nearly bankrupt of letters; Sir William Johnson, soldier, trader, skilled negotiator with the Indian tribes, greedy for land and for Indian wives, whose career in the Northern borders won him a knighthood and signaled New York's transition from dependent colony to self-subsistent province. With the exception of Cadwallader Colden, these were not reflective men, but men of action and grasping ambition, wresting a competency and a bit of elegance from the wilderness. In one sense, even the assiduous focus of Kammen's scholarship leaves them impenetrable beyond a basic calculus of struggle and sensation; but that is because Kammen is trying to tell the truth, and these New Yorkers of the founding time acted with nearly unconscious energy: subduing the land and building cities, not for God (or even using Him as an excuse), or for the estates general or for the crown (or using them as excuses), but almost for the sheer hell of it—as the nation would one day wrestle down a continent out of the same heedless energy, because it was there.

Elements of grace, of esthetic expression, are here, but as visual addenda. In a superb series of illustrations, Kammen shows us the furniture, artifacts and architecture of these early Dutch and English years. These possible afterthoughts (for they are but tenuously connected to the text) have a way of advancing a strong counter-argument. No purely materialistic, boorish society could produce such lovely creations as these! Such chairs of lithe strength and nearly spiritual grace—walnut, ashwood, gum and oak—such sturdy highboys and dowry chests, assertive of domestic order and family care; such compositions of brick and tile and ironwork; such minor poetry of domestic architecture: snug cottages, manor houses, barns; such tables—for eating, for gaming, for business; such clocks and desks and great snug beds! Here then, in functionalism and severity of line, in low country good humor and exuberance, is the element of imaginative play otherwise lacking in the narrative. Lacking literature or much theological thought, colonial New York leaves us its houses and furniture, showing us by these legacies that their time, the founding time, was not devoid of esthetic ambition or grace.

New York, as Kammen describes it,

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was the middle colony *par excellence*: linked by Calvinism to New England, and by slavery to the South; a frontier in its vast western forests, where ambition and heroic action soared; placidly domestic in downstate cottages and farms, where there was food aplenty, and drink, and a warm fire. Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper, incidentally, would later express this dichotomy between Knickerbocker and Natty Bumppo, New York as frontier and New York as crofter's paradise. It was an essential American duality, home and the far frontier, nature and the tangled human past; and New York sustained it in representative balance.

New York made up for its early inarticulation when two New Yorkers, James Fenimore Cooper and Washington Irving founded America's national literature. Its forests were grander, its Indians nobler, its people more energetic and diverse—than any other colony. Its strengths and weaknesses proved to be American strengths and weaknesses, once the colonies were free and united.

Kevin Starr

Kevin Starr is city librarian of San Francisco.

21: The Life and Times of New York's Favorite Club by Marilyn Kaytor

(Viking; $14.95)

The Life and Times of New York's Favorite Club is Marilyn Kaytor's history of 21. Not since Horatio Alger's *Luck and Pluck* series, *Ragged Dick or Street Life in New York* (c. 1867) has there been such an all American apple pie story as that of Jack Carl Kriendler (would-be pharmacist) and Charles A. Berns (eventually a lawyer). Sons of Austrian Jewish parents, raised speaking "Yiddish almost as much as English" on the lower East side and "immigrant crowded West side" just above Hell's Kitchen, the two boys by way of raising money for their higher education founded a national status symbol.

Traditional American success story themes are bundled together by *21*'s bright red dust jacket: hard work; ambition; good humor; courage. In this instance there is a loyal family as the title of Chapter 14 suggests: "We Have Tried Nepotism and It Works, Hurray." It begins with a cheerful breaking of the law, the Eighteenth Amendment, and comes complete with rationale: it was "a bad law"; Clarence Darrow is quoted in the book as saying so. But the important thing was money, as a sign of virtue. If America still allowed the eyes to reflect a man's soul, money would reflect his character.

Evolution of Greenwich Village's Red Head into 21 started with Kriendler borrowing his sister and brother-in-law, Anna and Henry Tannenbaum's life savings, $1000. A third partner, Irving, who wanted "nothing to do with liquor," was bought out. Booze was first sold in dollar-an-ounce flasks hidden in the coatroom, in overcoat pockets. Uncle Sam Brenner delivered what turned out to be some of the best hooch in town to Mama Sadie Kriendler, a midwife who delivered over 3000 babies, as well as the replenished flasks to her son's Speak. Jack's younger brothers—Pete, Mac, Bob—trundled flasks across town, hidden beneath groceries in little red wagons.

Fordham graduate Jack and NYU School of Commerce graduate Charlie, versed since childhood in street fighting wiles, punched it out on the pavements when Linky "The Killer" Mitchell's Irish gang, the Hudson Dusters, tried to take them over. Survival and success also depended on cigars for the Charles Street Police precinct, an occasional $50, and Christmas drinks on the house. Friends made in hard boyhood beginnings, such as Moe Smith, East side cigar store and boxing club manager, turned out to be a key Prohibition agent and therefore invaluable. The club then moves to Sixth and Washington Place. It becomes Fronton with a "closed-door-policy" and a peephole to insure it. Mayor Jimmy Walker, Edna St. Vincent Millay, *World* executive editor Herbert Bayard Swope, are patrons. Superior to but always sportsmanlike toward the competition, better educated Jack and Charlie represent neighborhood Speaks in their deals with Revenue agents who in turn leave the two alone because they "made enough money on the others."

All their way up Jack and Charlie assumed "the man of wealth's" burden as Andrew Carnegie saw it: "trustee and agent for his poorer brethren"; philanthropist; patron. This was Carnegie's solution to "the problem of the rich and the poor," keeping the peace between them. Orson Welles, broke at 19, was allowed to sign tabs for his meals, "even for the cigars which cost more than his monthly rent." Black Tuesday, October 1929, found the boys holding their price line but permitting people to charge. The bank holiday of 1933 found them printing script, cashing checks, handing out $50 bills. Jack and Charlie brilliantly survive the crash paying $130,000 to the Hochstadter family for their club's final resting place and still having enough left over for a wild New Year's Eve party, December 31, 1929.

The next address is uptown, West 49th, No. 42 "The Puncheon Grotto," in the townhouse, carriage-trade district. Jack and Charlie's story then asks the question: "Could two young boys from tenement life etc. . . . find happiness etc. . . . in the filthy rich Midtown Manhattan of 1926?" They found money (without it no one would have a 21 story to tell, especially Jack and Charlie). The gold strike makes (*Look* magazine's food editor for 12 years) Kaytor's text ineluctably eclectic: detailing the menu changes from variations on ham and/or cheese sandwiches to canard sauvage à la presse, interspersed with hereford photographs, snapshots of steaks in freezers; collapsing altogether into seven pages of recipes, giving the 21 story a function.

Uptown the mainstay customers of professionals, politicians, writers (Robert Benchley, John O'Hara, Lucius Beebe) get larded with society Du Ponts, Will Rogers, John Paul Getty: a paradise of people. Picking up the tab (being able to afford it) at 21 in casual, "homey" circumstances (idiosyncratic, of Jack's numerous estate auction purchases and other collected items), potentially surrounded by people you might not know socially or deserve to know professionally, becomes a success symptom. Money is the great equalizer after you have met 21's criteria of knowing how to spend it. *Cosmopolitan*'s Helen Gurley Brown finally gets a status table "by simply being for months on end a constant and lavish spender." No one had to be one of Ward McAllister's Wasp 400, a requirement that pinpointed New York City's Delmonico's as one of the most hated 19th century class symbols. Historian Allan Nevins cites the "prosperity dinner" for James G. Blaine as one of the contributing factors to his losing the 1884 presidential election. No one ever had to be born a Rhinelander, Schermerhorn, Goelet or Lorillard to get into 21. What had they done lately? 21 survives Voisin, Pavillon, because its format is tied to nothing finite, just power, at its

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most socially obvious.

21 West Fifty-Second Street is where the whole operation is finally enshrined with a seating capacity of 450, a minimum staff of 250 (a profit sharing plan for nonunion help plus medical and pension benefits). Over half the 21 employees have worked there all their working lives. Direct and collateral descendants of the founding fathers, Kriendler and Berns, still run the club. A 21 history might seem frivolous with New York City itself periodically threatening to declare bankruptcy. But like other case histories in the nostalgia craze, it seems peculiarly vital in times distinctly lacking in the stuff even daydreams are made of.

N.A. Straight

N.A. Straight has been Washington correspondent for the *Chattanooga Times* for eight years.

The Theatrical 20's by Allen Churchill

(McGraw-Hill; $20)

For several years after I would have wanted to be caught doing it, I sneaked into railroad stations or bus depots well ahead of departure time in order to read movie magazines at the newsstand. I had been, and secretly still was, star-struck beyond description, and the lure of all those glossy, supposed-to-be candid picture layouts of my favorite gods and goddesses was irresistible. I suspect often that lavish well-appointed stage histories such as Allen Churchill's *The Theatrical 20's* appeal to the same furtive interest: under the guise of documentary panorama, one is treated to a kaleidoscope of short, gossipy tales, rather like spinning photographs under one's thumb so that they give the illusion of movement. I don't complain. What could be more entertaining than a free-wheeling, fast-moving tour of Broadway in the '20s, and no claim is made for this book beyond entertainment; yet one is somehow a bit unsatisfied after all. Perhaps it is the elegance of the layout—a shimmering silvery Art Deco gloss—that promises a sophistication the text does not deliver, or maybe it is the occasional suggestion of a sociological or political context that almost, but never quite, places the ego of a Jed Harris, or the idiosyncrasies of a John Barrymore in period perspective. As it is, if there is any ultimate lesson to be learned from *The Theatrical 20's*, it is that theater and theater people change very little from decade to decade. One might think that the shrinking number of legitimate theaters and the lessening impact of the stage as a culture force in America over the last 50 years have had only a quantitative and not a qualitative effect on the medium.

Yet anyone involved in the contemporary theater takes away from this book a certain sadness about what we have lost in artistic opportunity from those bumper crop days of 1927, which Churchill describes in a short essay called "The Week That Was." Christmas week of 1927, notes Churchill, 18 shows opened in the span of six days. Eleven of these 18 opened in a single night: Monday, December 26. It is now, as I write this, December 26, 1975, 48 years later, and according to my *New York Times*, no Broadway show is scheduled to open tonight. What's more, there is only one formal Broadway opening scheduled for the whole of Christmas week. The artistic implications of such productivity as the '20s witnessed are considerable, although hardly dealt with by Churchill in the confines of this book. He is fascinated with numbers; for example, 76 theaters were a part of the Broadway scene in 1920, and only a fraction of those are operating today. But more interesting numbers to me are these: in 1924, two of America's leading young actresses, Helen Hayes and Katharine Cornell, appeared in three and four plays respectively—within the space of a single year! For both of those ladies a flop at the box office meant little more than sudden freedom to try their wings at yet another part and play. No such possibility arises for the successful young Broadway actor of today. With the paucity of new productions in any given season, every career decision looms as monumental: if the play is a hit one generally has a minimum of a 12-month commitment, if not a run of the play contract; if the production is a failure, the chances are slim of another coming along in the same season—too few plays are being done, and those that are being considered need the kind of box office insurance no actor fresh from a flop can provide. Small wonder that the Broadway stage actor takes refuge in the kind of exploitation of personal characteristics which leads inevitably to "personality" acting—with one crack a

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year at that ever-diminishing and notoriously fickle audience, one can hardly take chances.

Still Churchill's book offers convincing proof that, actors being actors, few stars were any more secure or confident in that era of burgeoning activity for the profession than they are today. Witness Jeanne Eagels who, through a combination of deep neurosis and plain bad breaks managed a life of despair more than comparable to any of our tragically wasted contemporaries (like the once-brilliant Kim Stanley). One might argue that a disproportionate amount of time is spent on Eagels when such figures as Duse, Bernhardt, Max Reinhardt show up for only the briefest mentions in the yearly "Round-up" that concludes each chapter, nevertheless one responds to this portrait of a star jealous enough to name her dog Maxine Elliott ("after the theatre, you know") and yet who created in Sadie Thompson one of the theater's most indelible characters. "No one has ever been able to ignite this great role like Jeanne Eagels" writes Churchill. "It's as if it were forever jinxed."

Pleasant, gossipy and finally touching sketches illuminate not only Jeanne Eagels, but Al Jolson, Florenz Ziegfeld, John Barrymore and a host of other flamboyant, autocratic figures of an age which not only allowed but welcomed idiosyncrasy. But finally pictures, not words, bring the era to life, and the pictures are more than worth the price of the volume. Here is Bela Lugosi, well before his blood sucking days, as a lusty sheik in a forgotten epic called *Arabesque*. Or note a sad-eyed young Edward G. Robinson as the Button Moulder in *Peer Gynt*. For fans of cheesecake nostalgia, there is a picture of the exquisite Ziegfeld girl Lena Thomas who, except for a tiny strategic corner of black lace might rival Marilyn Monroe as a queen of calender art. And if you've ever doubted the reports of John Barrymore's beauty, you might have a look at John Singer Sargent's impression of the actor, quickly sketched during the run of *Hamlet*. Beautifully framed, handsomely reproduced, the photographs in *The Theatrical 20's*, even when posed and formal, suggest something of the gaiety of the age, and more than a little of the hysteria behind so many of the bright, eager smiles.

It was finally the comics who gave voice to the apprehension behind the glamour. In flashes of anecdote here and there, in sketches of such kings of the era as W.C. Fields, Will Rogers, Joe Cook, and in occasional samples of the best of revue humor, Churchill indicates the satiric toughness, the ethnic insularity and the stringent unsentimentality that underlay the safe-edged imagery of the decade. The champagne was to go flat, the silver slippers were to be kicked under the bed to gather dust, and one turned to the comics to have a truthful grounding for laughter which threatened otherwise to be merely the mask of the day. Churchill begins his book with a quote from George Jean Nathan: "The wondrous lovely madness of the night went out of American life with the Twenties. You are a lucky man if you got a taste of it." Well, the night has its terrors too, but it is not within the province of this book to deal with them. Churchill also quotes Ernest Hemingway: "We all have a girl friend and her name is Nostalgia." If Hemingway is right, then *The Theatrical 20's* is a proper, attractive celebration of that perpetual romance.

Arvin Brown

Arvin Brown is artistic director of the Long Wharf Theatre.

Correspondence

More on Money and Sanctimony

To the editors:

The article in your January 31st issue entitled "Money and Sanctimony" was written with such personal animosity that it should have been signed, and not printed as an editorial. I cannot believe that this peevish piece accurately reflects *The New Republic*'s editorial opinion of John Gardner and Common Cause.

Let me say at once that I share your dislike for probing into people's private lives, and I agree that the mania for indiscriminate disclosure may have been carried too far. In this sense, even as an original and consistent supporter of Common Cause, I would support the McCarthy view, at least emotionally.

Nevertheless, I completely condemn your disregard for relevant truths concerning John Gardner and Common Cause. What you call "his unfocused enterprise" began in the summer of 1970, two years before Watergate, as an organized effort to restructure the forms of local, state and federal government so as to bring about the reforms recognized by liberals like yourselves (I always assumed) and me as absolutely essential to the survival of democracy in this country. The substantial achievements of Common Cause have engendered the increasing weight of attention that is paid to its stand on the central issues involving government reform. It is mystifying, as well as discouraging, to see you take so hostile an attitude toward an organization which is, in large part, on your side.

All of this has a familiar ring: once again you demonstrate an inability to judge people, as in 1968, when you could not choose between Nixon and Humphrey. TRB, at the time, made an effort to get you off dead center by coming out for Humphrey. Perhaps he can rescue you again by writing a dispassionate, fair appraisal of John Gardner.

Ralph S. Berendt
Manlius, New York

To the editors:

I have just read the editorial on John Gardner and Common Cause in the January 31st issue of *The New Republic*. By God, sirs, that is a fine and incisive piece of journalism. Walter Lippmann, wherever he find himself, will be proud!

Robert Cochran
Bethesda, Maryland

To the editors:

As a long time reader and admirer of *The New Republic* I was shocked that you should have written, much less published, that petty and personal attack on John Gardner and Common Cause. It was worthy of Spiro at his finest, a classical example of the divisiveness which is the curse of the human conditon.

J.H. Holtvoigt
Tipp City, Ohio

To the editors:

One of your basic untruths is that John Gardner is Common Cause. I have been an activist in Common Cause for four years now, close to the firing line, and I never think of myself or other activists as dedicated to any political ideas except those having to do with the lost democ-

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ratic principles that have guided most of American government in most of its history. True, too often and above all in the last 20 years, we are far from these guiding principles. The aim of Common Cause is to get back to them, Gardner quite aside, for we have sought these goals through our adult lives. Joining together, citizens who believe that government can be responsive to people, rather than to special interests and power politics, have built Common Cause. Over 360,000 present members are the backbone of this group. They didn't need John Gardner to tell them what was wrong with American politics.

Your distortions and omissions concerning Common Cause achievements are unworthy of your paper and we hope that you will see to it that the necessary research is done to correct this insult against one of the most constructive non-partisan political reform groups in existence today.

Evelyn Weiss
Brooklyn, New York

To the editors:

After reading the lead editorial of the Jan. 31 issue of *TNR* regarding Common Cause and John Gardner, I quickly checked the masthead to see when James Kilpatrick or William Buckley joined the staff. Their vast non-sequiturs and snide ad-hominem generalities have no place in our liberal magazine, and it was in shocked surprise that I found them there. As a long time liberal I have always looked to *The New Republic* as an *excellent* source in the rough and tumble of political ideas. Living in the state of Washington, home of Sen. Jackson who took all 52 delegates to Miami in '72 although 40 percent of the state was for McGovern, whose legislature is shredded by the scandal-ridden resignation of its two Democratic leaders and their inability to fund the common schools, we think Common Cause is right on target here.

Further, while *Excellence* is not the greatest book ever written, your editor might reread page 160 and consider it when next he attacks a liberal citizen's group: "we need individual excellence in all its forms—in every kind of creative endeavor, in political life, in education, in industry—in short, universally. . . . The idea for which this nation stands will not survive if the highest goal free men can set themselves is an amiable mediocrity."

And mediocre was the editorial, in its choice of target, its content, and its reasoning. In the words of Gene McCarthy's manager, "stick it in your ear."

A.L. McDonald
Seattle, Washington

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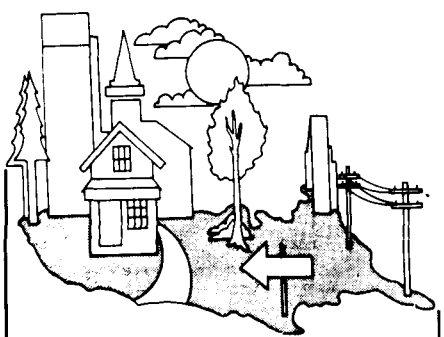

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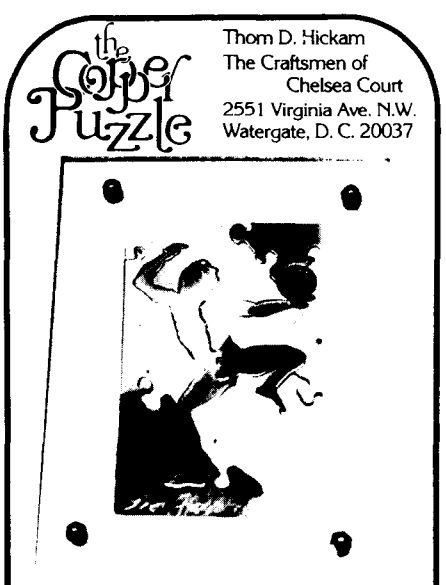

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